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The Poetry of Death: an Examination of the Language and Concepts in the Articulation of Death in the *Iliad*

by

©

Lisa Maryann Micheelsen

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommended to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled *The Poetry of Death: An Examination of the Language and Concepts in the Articulation of Death in the Iliad* submitted by Lisa Maryann Micheelsen in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Classics.

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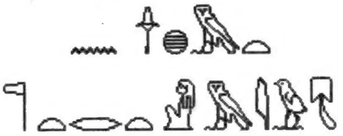
Dedication



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Abstract

Chapter one provides an overview of the subject of death in Homer and states the goals to be pursued and the methodology that is to be followed. It is set out that the approach taken will be narratological and philological.

Chapter two highlights the key research on the major 'death' terms in Homer, orienting the reader within the context of the subject, and providing an idea of the current state of the scholarship. This chapter also establishes distinct shades of meaning for each term.

The third chapter treats the use of these terms in the poem. It is argued that death terms appear most often when death is *not* occurring, while passages which *do* depict death typically avoid naming it. Named and nameless death are distinct, and are used in different sorts of passages for altogether different effects.

The fourth chapter further explores this finding. Named death is usually found in speeches of the characters. Nameless death is typically the prerogative of the narrator. It is argued that what the characters *say* about death and what they *do* when confronted by it are seldom the same.

Chapter five deals with character speeches of and about Achilles. The evidence for ambivalence towards heroic death is considered. Achilles, it is argued, possesses a narrator-like knowledge of his situation, and therefore comes to give voice to a perspective that is in keeping with the narrator's own. Character and narrator positions are not necessarily perfectly sequestered, and this serves to underline the complexity of the issues involved.

Chapter six serves as a conclusion, in which it is argued that the poet, by means of the distinctions he draws between the cultural concept of death and the biological fact of death, and by means of the differing perspectives he presents in narrator and character-spoken text, raises multiple questions concerning the possibility of heroic death. The

merits of the afterlife are compared with the survival of κλέος (the warrior's ultimate goal). It is found that even κλέος is undermined in the poem, and therefore the role of epic as the bestower of κλέος is compromised.

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Abbreviations

AClass	Acta Classica
AncSoc	Ancient Society
Apeiron	Apeiron. A Journal for Ancient Philosophy and Science
Athenaeum	Athenaeum. Studi Periodici di Letteratura e Storia dell' Antichità
BICS	Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies
ClAnt	Classical Antiquity
CP	Classical Philology
CQ	Classical Quarterly
CR	Classical Review
CSCA	California Studies in Classical Antiquity
G&R	Greece and Rome
HSPh	Harvard Studies in Classical Philology
HThR	Harvard Theological Review
IF	Indogermanische Forschungen. Zeitschrift für Indogermanistik und allgemeine Sprachwissenschaft
JHI	Journal of the History of Ideas
JHS	Journal of Hellenic Studies

JIES	Journal of Indo-european Studies
Kairos	Kairos. Zeitschrift für Religionswissenschaft und Théologie
Lampas	Lampas. Tijdschrift voor Nederlandse Classici
MH	Museum Helveticum
PHI	Packard Humanities Institute CD-ROM #5.3 (Latin Texts and Bible Versions). Packard Humanities Institute, 1991
QUCC	Quaderni Urbinati di Cultura Classica
RBPh	Revue Belge de Philologie et d' Histoire
RPh	Revue Philosophique
SIFC	Studi Italiani di Filologia Classica
TAPA	Transactions of the American Philological Association
TLG	Thesaurus Linguae Graecae CD-ROM #D. The Packard Humanities Institute, 1992.
Wst	Wiener Studien
ZAnt	Ziva Antica

Chapter 1

Death and Homeric Literature

A work about death often modulates readily, if eerily, into a work about literature. For death inhabits texts.

Walter J. Ong, ***Interfaces of the Word***. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977. p.238.

Death is the sanction of everything the storyteller can tell. He has borrowed his authority from death.

Walter Benjamin, ***The Storyteller***, Sct. 11. 1936; repr. in ***Illuminations***, ed. by Hannah Arendt, 1968).

In its inception, this work was intended to present a general survey on the very broad and unwieldy subject of death in Homeric poetry. As I began to refine and focus my research, I turned my attention to the specific matter of death terminology in the *Iliad*. This research yielded some surprising and unforeseen results. In examining the appearance and absence of death terms in passages relating to mortality, as well as in giving consideration to who and who does not speak death's name, it became apparent that I was dealing with issues surrounding the roles of the narrator and focalizers[1] and that a narratological approach was therefore going to be necessary.

W. J. Ong's observation (see epigraph at the beginning) is borne out. This is a work on death and the way in which various death terms are used to represent it, but it has also expanded to become a work on the nature of Homeric literature itself and the place of the narrator within the text. The issue of death in the *Iliad* cannot be treated fairly without due consideration of the narratological structure of the work, for so very much that may be gleaned from the text concerning death is given meaning by the text's structure. Homer tells us a great deal both in what he says and in what he leaves unsaid, and his choices concerning the various voices in the poem are equally telling.

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[1] A single story may be presented from various and differing points of view. Presentation of such divergent perspectives or angles constitutes what is known as focalization, and the individual to whom the focalization is attributed is known as a focalizer.

The various death-terms found in Homer are not synonyms. Rather, each term possesses a distinct shade of meaning which colours the passage in which it appears, and each denotes a specific type of death (or attitude toward it). Moreover, these terms are *most often* employed by the poem's characters, and, to be more specific, heroes. The narrator, to whom falls the task of depicting death as it happens, frequently leaves it nameless, opting instead to *describe* it as a biological process. As a result, death is seldom named by a death term in passages wherein life actually exits the body. When heroes discuss and name death, they typically do so when there is no immediate danger to them or to their comrades.

I need to make clear at the outset that I am in no way claiming that these general patterns constitute hard and fast rules. There are certainly cases wherein the heroes name a death that is at hand, as there are cases wherein the narrator names death as it occurs. Nonetheless, a general trend in usage can be detected, and this trend is relevant and worth exploring, if only because it is symptomatic of the poem's attempt to force the crude reality of death upon the audience at various points, and hold it at an idealizing distance at other points.

These two distinct presentations of death are interwoven throughout the poem. Named death, which most often appears in the speeches of heroes, is the death of their cultural construct (and hence, the poetic construct), the 'good death' in battle that they all espouse. It is intellectualized, culturally 'tamed' and made manageable by a complex ideological system.[2] It is usually mentioned when it is not immediately at hand and does not pose any real threat, and it is the source of much philosophical contemplation. The second death typically haunts the passages in which the narrator himself speaks. It is the biological fact, the physical effect on the human body. It is the violence that we, the audience, are shown as life actually terminates. This death is unknowable and defies any attempt at quantitative assessment via language. It is the death that lurks outside of the bounds of poetry, and thus the narrator does not attempt to give it name, but describes for us only the ruin which leads up to it or is left in its wake.

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[2] Since 'ideology' is a term of which I shall be making great use throughout this work, I should define what I mean by it. I use it to mean that which relates to the content of thinking characteristic of Homeric culture, and the integrated assertions and theories that constitute its sociopolitical system. These assertions and theories may be understood to be conscious or unconscious on the part of those who possess them.

All of this will be argued in upcoming chapters. The purpose of the present chapter is to provide a broad overview of the subject of death in Homer, and to set out clearly for the reader my own methodological approach and my position on such topics as the poem's historicity, performance, the epic genre and external influences.

In the second chapter (*Naming Death*), the significant research on all the major terms for death in Homer is highlighted in order to orient the reader firmly within the context of the specific subject at hand, and to provide some idea of the current state of scholarship.

The third chapter (*Presence and Absence*) moves on to demonstrate the stated objectives of this work, looking at the actual appearances of these death terms within the poem itself, where they are typically used, and where they are typically avoided. It is argued that death terms appear chiefly in parts of the poem in which death is *not* actually occurring, while passages which *do* tend to depict the moment of death avoid naming it as a general (but not all-encompassing) rule. Named and nameless death appear to be *generally* distinct from one another, and are often used in different sorts of passages for an altogether different effect.

The fourth chapter (*Ideology and Reality*) seeks to take the exploration of these two distinct portrayals of death one step further. Named death belongs almost exclusively to the characters, while nameless death is generally the prerogative of the narrator. The narrator constantly places his characters in positions in which we, the audience, realize that they think they have a notion of what death is. He then goes on to undermine this notion, revealing the illusory nature of the characters' knowledge. It is demonstrated that what the characters *say* (in character speeches) about death, and what they *do* when confronted by it (in narrative passages), are seldom one and the same. Character speech and character action are often widely divergent (except in the case of anti-heroic sentiments voiced by characters such as Achilles, which are treated in chapter 5).

Chapter five (*Denial and Affirmation*) moves beyond the narrative passages with their nameless, biological descriptions of death and their many portrayals of fleeing heroes, and focuses exclusively on character speeches (specifically those of Achilles). The purpose of this chapter is to delve deeper into the different conceptions of death presented in character-spoken text. The heroes of the poem say many things concerning death, and many of these things they will never put into application. Even so, if we consider only what the characters say, we will see that while they support in general theory the ideal of heroic death as a whole, there are remarkable instances in which even they break from the accepted standard of heroic thought and speech. On a spoken level there exists among the heroes an element of dissension, and there are instances in which we are presented with an unmistakable ambivalence towards heroic death, even among those who should pride themselves on their wholehearted commitment to it. In reality, the boundary between character-spoken and narrator-spoken text often blurs on this point. Scholarship has so often accepted the 'good' death at face value, based on what the majority of characters say in the majority of instances, that it has at times neglected the fact that there are occasional, violent tears in the fabric of the proposed value system.

It is apparent that the characters do not know all that they think they know concerning death. They often speak of death bravely, but rarely face it in this manner. The poem then further punctures the illusion of the reality of the heroic ideal by demonstrating that even among characters, those for whom heroic death is an ideal that belongs not only in the realm of words, but also in the realm of action, there is in fact a definite crisis of belief. The narrator does not seem to possess absolute conviction of the values of his heroes, and the heroes do not always believe in them absolutely themselves. They have doubts about their code and their world, almost as if they themselves can see that it is all an artifice, styled somewhat arbitrarily by the capricious whims of culture contained within the text. Thus, we will often see that characters don't hold firmly to their views as we might expect them to, and the boundaries between the ideals generally presented in narrator and heroic speech will at times be crossed. Ambivalence is recognized by the poem as a valid stance on an unresolvable issue.

In the fifth chapter, the heroic ideal as proclaimed by characters is therefore considered, as is the innate loathing of death which is, paradoxically, also present in character references to death. The hero's exploration of the issues surrounding heroic (the 'beautiful') death is treated in some detail, as are the concepts of active and passive dying.

The interplay of perspectives presented to the audience brings us to an important issue. It is all too easy to read the ambiguity of heroes on the subject of death as reflecting the poem's position[3], and R. J. Rabel discusses this tendency, saying "A number of critics have read the *Iliad* as a play of counterbalancing perspectives in this way, an analysis and critique of the heroic ethic carried out by Achilleus, who, speaking for the poet, comes to reject the values of society, represented by minor characters, and constructs a new form of heroism."[4] I do not read the voice of a character such as Achilles as being one and the same as the voice of Homer. Does Achilles represent the values championed by the poet? We cannot know. The poet keeps himself well out of the text, and lets his narrator do the talking, just as the narrator at various points silences his own voice in favour of those of his characters. The characters exist only insofar as the narrator speaks about them or causes them to speak, and the narrator exists only insofar as the poem gives him voice. Obviously, no word is spoken in the poem that is not intended by the poet, and to this extent all divergent and contradictory voices within the text are those of Homer. But we cannot assume that Achilles reflects more accurately the opinions of the poet than other heroes who do not question the heroic model. It is entirely possible that the poet is not interested in conveying his own opinions at all, but is interested instead in exploring how his human characters come to terms with the world in which they live.

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[3] When I speak of the 'poem' I am referring to the whole that encompasses the poet, the narrator and character voices.

[4] Rabel 1997, p. 5.

Achilles, therefore, will be treated as a character with his own motivations and questions, the creation of the poet but not necessarily reflecting any personal convictions of the poet. Characters, narrator and poet all stand clearly delineated with respect to each other and their function within the text. The main purpose of this work is not to demonstrate that we can know exactly where Homer stands on any given issue, reading his work as though it were self-referential or autobiographical. The purpose of this thesis is, rather, to demonstrate that the poem presents us with a richly-layered text that employs numerous perspectives and raises multiple questions without attempting to answer them for us. The *Iliad* contains the fundamentals necessary to provoke the audience, yet the poet offers nothing of himself; he is inscrutable and unknowable behind the many masks of his characters. Like death itself, the poet possesses a multiplicity of aspects, and lurks beyond the boundaries of the text.

The text, by means of the distinctions it draws between named and nameless death, the death about which characters speak and the narrative death from which they flee, and even by means of the ambivalence it places in the mouths of the characters themselves, raises questions on every level concerning the possibility of heroic death in application. There can be no one correct reading of the poem. The fact that matters are open to interpretation is vital to the poem's success; it is one of the factors that accounts for its continued appeal over so many centuries among so many widely divergent audiences.

The final chapter (*Conclusion*) attempts to offer some coherent conclusions based on my findings. Finally, there is a statistical appendix which demonstrates how the various death related passages in the poem, by and large, fit the patterns of usage I have attempted to establish.

The approach taken in this work is twofold; it is at the same time both philological and narratological. Death terms and their epithets are treated in detail, and the question of their synonymy is explored, although this is but a foundation upon which the real focus of this study rests. The main purpose of this work is to explore how these various terms are used (and by whom) within the narrative structure of the poem. Questions of composition and performance take on a decidedly secondary role here, and this is quite deliberate. Much has been written on these topics; they are important and need to be addressed to some degree by any scholar who writes on Homer. Richard Martin speaks to these issues effectively in his book *The Language of Heroes*, stressing that they are vitally important and yet need not preclude the possibility of other sorts of studies. As he says,

> Does it really matter whether or not Homer's *Iliad* is a piece of oral poetry? In the final analysis, no. Even if the 15,693 hexameters printed in T. W. Allen's Oxford Classical Text happen to represent the exact transcription of an actual performance by one "singer of tales" from the eighth century B.C., we still do not have an oral *Iliad*, because the poem has, somehow, become a text; and that has made all the difference. To put it another way, our *Iliad* is no longer an action, as it must have been if it was ever an oral composition-in-performance. Instead, it is an artifact.

He continues,

> To concede that our *Iliad* is a text, however, does not excuse us from making an effort of imaginative reconstruction to interpret the poem as closely as possible in its own context. Athenian drama, after all, was never intended to be read simply as isolated texts, and few scholars today would dare study it without some attempt at understanding the circumstances of dramatic performance...A new reaction has set in against the work of Milman Parry and other exponents of an "oral" Homeric poetry—or, we should say, against a certain portion of this work, for many of Parry's insights are ignored by the new critique. The oralists' concern with technique has earned them the label "Formalists," and their emphasis on the traditional nature of Homeric craft has prompted the charge that they ignore the individual genius of the poet...It is disturbing to see young philologists such as David Shive find it necessary to attack the alleged flaws in Parry's first publication, and to defend the "creativity" of Homer, while failing to reexamine the very idea of what creativity in an oral tradition might mean.[5]

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[5] Martin 1989, pp. 1-2.

Martin's argument that the genius of the individual poet is not irreconcilable with the formal structure of the epic genre is compelling. The Homeric poet may well be envisioned as master of his genre, rather than slave. Treating the poem as we have it as a text, I shall nevertheless attempt to be aware when oral poetics might impact my interpretation.[6] It is important that I state my position on such matters, so that the assumptions I am working under may be clear to the reader. I shall come back to the matter of performance shortly, since the role of the audience (narratee-focalizee) is an important consideration in a work attempting a narratological approach. On the subject of oral theory and composition, however, I take my lead from I. J. F. DeJong, when she says of her own work,

> This study, [too], will try to account for the *Iliad* as it is rather than to reconstruct how it came about. More specifically, I intend to study the *Iliad* as a narrative text, analyzing it within the theoretical framework of narratology, i.e. the theory that deals with the general principles underlying narrative texts. Narratologists are concerned with such issues as characterization, chronology, suspense, space, plot-structure, point of view and the role of the narrator.[7]

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[6] I am following what is now the most *generally* accepted opinion (although it is not new): that each poem is the work of a single poet, although the same poet is not necessarily the author of both poems (as Bowra 1967 discusses this on p. 65). It is likely that the poet /poets drew upon an extensive and long-standing oral tradition, and it seems that both poems were committed to writing at some point in the later part of the eighth century B.C., or even later, in the 7th century B.C. Davison 1967 proposes a likely *terminus post quem* of about 700 B.C. for the *Iliad*, and circa 620 B.C. as the *terminus ante quem* for the *Odyssey* (p. 259), and this later dating of the poems has recently gained in popularity among scholars. Osborne 1996 discusses the date of the Homeric texts and their relationship to history in his book, pp. 156-160, and argues that they were committed to writing in the early 7th century B.C.

The *Odyssey* acts as a sequel to the *Iliad*, presupposing a knowledge on the part of the audience of the story of the fall of Troy, and filling in details which the first poem leaves out (for example, the *Iliad* is far more laconic than the *Odyssey* with respect to details about the afterlife). It is likely, for this reason, that the *Odyssey* was written down after the *Iliad*, although the two poems do seem to be close in terms of dates (again, Bowra 1967 discusses this p. 61). For treatment of this, one may look to Haslam 1997 pp. 55-100, (although he argues for the writing down of the Homeric texts in the eighth century B.C., prior to the works of Hesiod, pp. 80-81).

For a discussion on the various issues involved in the questions converning date and composition, see the above mentioned works, as well as Kirk 1976 pp. 820-850, and Lord 1967 pp. 179-214. Also noteworthy are Finkelberg 1987 and Hainsworth, 1970. For more recent treatments of the subject, see Nagy 1996, as well as his 1997 chapter "in *A New Companion to Homer*, pp. 101-122. For evidence of the re-emerging controversy, see Janko's 1998 review of the latter. See also Powell 1991.

[7] DeJong1989, introduction p. x. An excellent summary of the principles and methods of narratology is given in chapter 2 (A Narratological Model of Analysis), pp.29-40.

DeJong explains that there are three distinct layers of poetic structure to be considered, and these are text, story and fabula:

> That which the hearer/reader/ hears/reads is a text (first layer). The *text*, consisting of a finite, structured whole of language signs, is the result of the narrating activity (narration) of a narrator. That which the narrator tells, the object of his narration, is a story (second layer). The *story*, consisting of a fabula...looked at from a certain, specific angle, is the result of the focalizing activity (focalizations) of a focalizer. Focalization comprises not only 'seeing', but ordering, interpreting, in short all mental activities. That which the focalizer focalizes, the object of his focalization, is a fabula (third layer). The *fabula*, consisting of a logically and chronologically related series of events, is the result of all kinds of activities by characters in a fictional world.[8]

Point of view, or 'focalization' is an important consideration in distinguishing character/narrator text. The bulk of the *Iliad* fits a simple narrator text pattern, with one primary narrator/focalizer. The narrator rarely refers to his own presence in the text, although there are certainly points at which he makes himself explicitly known to us (e.g. *Il.* 2.492).[9] What characters know about death is often strikingly distinct from what the narrator, who shows them to us, knows. The characters on the whole know one aspect of death (although there are times of crisis when questions arise), but the narrator, distinct and separate, is always showing us that he knows another.[10]

L. E. Doherty writes specifically on the *Odyssey*, but her remarks apply just as well to the *Iliad*. She says:

> In the *Odyssey*, for example, there is a single *primary* narrator, the epic narrator who frames and orchestrates the work as a whole; but many characters serve as internal, or "secondary," narrators, and some of these report the words of others, who can be seen as narrating on yet a third level (an example would be the sea god Proteus, whose words are reported to Telemachus by Menelaus). All narrators are also focalizers; that is to say, their perspectives on the action inform the accounts they give of that action. But characters who do not narrate may also be used as focalizers if their perspectives are emphasised in passages narrated by others; I see traces of this "embedded" focalization in the stories of famous women reported by Odysseus (11.235-329). There results a kind of narrative

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[8] Ibid, p. 31.

[9] Ibid. p. 41.

[10] Block 1982 provides many interesting observations on the interaction between characters and narrators.

> hierarchy, in which some positions have greater weight than others. I see two distinct, if related, elements that contribute to the narrative hierarchy: the space accorded different narrators and focalizers, and the degree to which each is "authorized"—identified as reliable—by the overarching perspective of the primary narrator. Space alone is not enough to ensure a narrator of authority; but without space, authority remains hypothetical.[11]

Homer is of course in control at all times, allowing all those within the text to know or not know whatsoever he chooses that they should know or not know. The narrator calls upon the goddess (i.e. the Muse) in *Il.* 1.1 to sing the tale through him. He will be the vessel for the divine truth, and she his divine authority. In a sense, the Muse in this case is one and the same as the poet himself, for although within the narrative structure of the text it is she who weaves the tale, outside of the fiction of the text it is Homer.

The role of the narrator has become one of the main points of interest in this work. How does he present the story, what does he say to the audience directly, and what does he allow to be said by the characters? I often refer to 'the poet' of the *Iliad* (or Homer), but I do attempt to keep this distinct from the fictional narrative voice whenever I am discussing what the poet causes the narrator to say directly to the audience. The narrator is a character no less contrived or fictional than the poem's other characters (albeit possessing more knowledge). This is not a new approach. As DeJong points out, the distinction between narrator and poet was first noted by Aristotle in *Poetics* 60a 5-11, wherein he comments upon the activity of narration as a function of the poet, but different from the poet speaking personally as himself.[12]

Having set out a brief overview of my approach to the poem, the narrator and the characters, it is perhaps fitting to say a little about the other players whose role is so integral to the function of epic: the audience (narratee-focalizees). If we wish to discuss point of view and knowledge, we must attempt to establish at least a basic understanding concerning the point of view and knowledge of the listeners. Though their presence is seldom brought into the text itself, the poet is clearly composing the work for them, and using the narrator as the messenger who conveys the story. The narrator, too, is necessarily aware of the audience to whom he speaks, and addresses the listener directly (somewhat intimately in the second person singular) in a number of passages (e.g. *Il.* 4.223 and 429, 5.85, 15.697, 16.366). The narrator has pulled the audience into the text and turned them into temporary eye witnesses to the action, although he remains in undisputed control over what he allows them to see and think.[13] For the greater part, however, the audience, like the narrator himself, is external to the action and outside the story. This does not mean that the audience does not impact the creation of the text, however. As N. Felson has noted, "...listeners contribute meaning in that their very presence is absorbed ahead of time into the poem. That is, insofar as Homer gears his epic to them, he enlists their resources in creating meaning."[14]

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[11] Doherty 1998 p.18.

[12] Ibid. pp.7-8.

Who were they, and what do we know of Homer's reception among them? Our knowledge of the Homeric audience prior to the late Hellenistic period is scanty at best. We have no way of knowing the exact form the earliest epic took in performance, nor at what exact point it was committed to writing. Nor do we know the full effect that writing might have had upon further textual development. These stories clearly originated out of an oral tradition that at some point became a literary tradition. They focus on an aristocratic warrior class, and may originally have been sung at the courts of the powerful to reinforce the status quo, although the earliest external evidence suggests that they were sung for a somewhat less than aristocratic audience. At some point by the sixth century B.C., however, they become undisputed public domain and were performed in public festivals (e.g. the Panatheneia).[15] We have no way of knowing how the nature of the poems might have been altered by this transition, how fixed or fluid the versions performed were, or to what degree audience response influenced their development.

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[13] DeJong 1989 pp. 54-55.

[14] Felson 1994, p.10. For more on the questions surrounding the issue of performance, see Nagy 1996, Taplin 1992, and Edmunds and Wallace 1997 (although this work does not place a great deal of specific emphasis on Homer).

[15] See p. 41 of Lamberton 1997, pp.33-54, wherein all of this is discussed.

Prior to the creation of the late Hellenistic vulgate text, possibly the first uniform text resembling closely what we know as the *Iliad* today, we have various citations of work attributed to Homer. They appear in texts by the fifth century authors Herodotus, Thucydides, Aristophanes, Democritus, and are also mentioned in the Hippocratic Corpus, and they appear in texts by fourth century authors Plato and Aristotle. It is only through written sources that we can actually *know* something about how Homer was received and understood in antiquity. For example, we know that the pre-Socratic philosophers disdained Homer's anthropomorphic gods, while Plato and Aristotle perceived in Homer a proto-philosopher who delivered an encoded truth in his archaic hexameters.[16] It is from such sources that we also come to understand how different the text in antiquity might have been from the one we now possess. From our fifth century sources we know that the lost cyclic material, as well as the Homeric Hymns, were widely attributed to Homer himself, and it is unclear how much additional material now left out might at that time have been included in the text of the *Iliad*. Our fourth century sources also bear witness to this problem: Aristotle cites many lines not contained within the received text, while Plato and Aeschines also include lines now omitted, and leave out lines now accepted.[17] This poses many difficulties concerning the text that we now generally understand to be the *Iliad*. G. Nagy sums up the problem:

> ...Homeric scholarship has not yet succeeded in achieving a definitive edition of either the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey*. Ideally, such an edition would encompass the full historical reality of the Homeric textual tradition as it evolved through time, from the pre-Classical era well into the medieval. The problem is, Homeric scholarship has not yet reached a consensus on the criteria for establishing an edition as 'definitive.' The ongoing disagreements reflect a wide variety of answers to the many serious questions that remain about Homer and Homeric poetry. Crucial to most of these questions is the information provided by the Homeric scholia.[18]

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[16] Ibid. pp. 33-38. Also of use on this subject is Lamberton and Keaney 1992, as well as Clarke 1981.

[17] Lamberton 1997 p. 33.

[18] p. 101 of Nagy 1997.

The scholia are vital to our knowledge of the evolution of the poem and its transmission. The editions of the critics which are drawn upon by the scholiasts are those of Zenodotus of Ephesus (to whom is attributed the first 'Alexandrian' edition of Homer in the third century B.C.), Aristophanes of Byzantium (head of the library at Alexandria at the beginning of the second century B.C., and a subsequent director of the library), and Aristarchus of Samothrace (whose work dates to the mid-second century B.C.). It is Aristarchus whose text is most often cited by the scholia, and it is this edition which seems to have been accepted as the most authoritative.[19] The earliest of these, from the third century B.C., is remarkably different from the later Hellenistic vulgate text which subsequently became the standard, and this demonstrates clearly the need for constant caution on our part in dealing with the text.

Nagy discusses the relevance of the scholia in determining the 'true' text and points out that serious doubt is cast upon the authenticity of the text as it is received. As evidence of this, he refers to the ancient claim that the true Homeric poems had in fact become extinct by the time of Peisistratos, and that the tyrant had offered a reward to any who could bring him Homeric verses. Suuposedly, this resulted in many selling their own verses to Peisistratos as though they were Homer's. These verses were left in the edition by the critics (κριτικοί), although they were marked by an obelus. [20]

Also demanding of caution on the part of the reader is the question of historicity within the poem. To what degree should Homer be considered in attempts to illuminate a little known era in Greek history? Is the poem a valuable literary source for historical data, or is it such an amalgamation of elements and eras that it should be classified as a completely artificial product of the poetic tradition? This question is inextricably bound up with two others, namely the 'Homeric Question', which focuses on formation of the poem, and the 'Trojan War Question', which focuses on the origin of the myths of Troy, and the possibility that Homer's poetry was informed by memories of an actual Bronze Age war. For M. I. Finley, the "Homeric world was altogether post-Mycenaean, and the so-called reminiscences and survivals are rare, isolated and garbled". Finley argues that the break between the Mycenaean period and the so-called Dark Age was total. In contrast with this, E. Vermeule claims that there was no break between the Mycenaean world and what followed, only change.[21]

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[19] Ibid., p.102.

So, does the poem present a coherent enough picture to be accepted as historical on any level? K. A. Raaflaub synthesizes the prevalent lines of thought on the issues of the text's historicity, and his summation presents a case that would seem to be entirely logical:

> The understanding of Homeric society that emerges from these discussions can be summarized as follows. First, the picture includes some anachronisms, some archaisms, and some genuine memories of the Mycenaean period and the 'Dark Ages.' The list of such items is short and under constant revision; in several cases there are alternative explanations. Moreover, archaisms had their proper place in such poetry. Second, exaggeration and fantasy form important elements in heroic poetry; in most cases, they can easily be identified and do not impede serious reconstruction. Third, persons, events and a few other components may have formed an old, perhaps even historical core of old traditions. Even if so, in the course of long-term transmission and constant reinterpretation, such core stories were probably transformed so profoundly that we cannot trace their beginnings. Fourth, the poet was an artist, not a historian or sociologist. He did not intend to give a complete picture, and so arguments from silence are rarely valid.... Fifth, most of the material used to depict the social background to heroic action is sufficiently consistent that we can recognize a society that makes sense from an anthropological perspective and can be fitted into a scheme of social evolution among early societies. This society must have existed in time and space outside the epics. The place most likely was Ionia, but, given the panhellenic outlook and aspiration of the epics, this question seems secondary.[22]

These are to be the basic assumptions concerning historicity upon which this thesis works. Yet the poem's greatest relevance in historical terms lies not in the

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[20] Ibid pp.101-102. For more discussion of the various editions of the Homeric texts, see Haslam 1997 pp. 55-100.

[21] See p. 625-626 Raaflaub 1997 pp. 624-648, for a treatment of these subjects and an overview of the scholarship concerning these questions.

fossilization of concrete fact, as R. Osborne points out. While the poems do have historical value, this value rests more in the poems' social attitudes than in their presentation of precise details.

> The contribution which the Homeric and Hesiodic poems make to the historian rests not with any additional information which they provide on topics illuminated by the archaeologist, but with the evidence they give for ways of seeing the world, ways which archaeology can at best only dimly illuminate. Where archaeology can show something of where and how the gods were worshipped, Hesiod gives us some sense of the rationale for that worship, and the sorts of explanation which might appropriately be invoked to explain the material traces familiar from archaeology. Where archaeology gives us evidence for Greeks moving from place to place and establishing contact with non-Greeks, the *Odyssey* can show something of how the Greeks used the different customs and priorities of others to clarify what it was to be Greek; and the *Theogony*, in particular, can add to the evidence which art history and the development of the alphabet provide for how the encounter with foreign practices and objects was rendered productive within Greek communities.[23]

Questions of external influence should also be addressed at this point. The similarities between the works of Homer and poems of the ancient Near East are often striking, particularly in the case of those from Mesopotamia. To quote S. Morris:

> In their historical and literary setting, the poems of Homer and the epic cycle belong to the eastern Mediterranean: they share narrative elements with neighboring cultures since the Bronze Age, and show specific connections to Near Eastern history and mythology. Evidence for these connections has increased since the nineteenth century, with the discovery of Near Eastern texts and of archaeological evidence for the transmission of ideas....When the Homeric corpus took final shape in the Archaic period, it incorporated centuries of oral performance and of exposure to other narratives. In their final form, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are harvested from a rich heritage of stories long alive in the Bronze Age and in the Near East, reconstituted into an epic tradition of uniquely Greek heroic dimensions.[24]

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[22] Ibid., p. 627.

[23] Osborne 1996 pp.156-157.

[24] See p. 599 of Morris 1997, 599-623. In this article, Morris discusses not only the many striking similarities between Homeric and Mesopotamian poetry, but also the similarities which exist between Homeric poetry and other oriental bodies of literature (for example, the literature of the Egyptians and the Bible). She also discusses transmission and possible points of contact. Of fundamental importance on this subject is West 1997, (although West is more exclusive in his treatment of Near Eastern sources than is Morris; he assiduously avoids Egyptian material, for example, claiming in the opening of his preface that it is inconsequential and has been much written about already). West focuses intently on Mesopotamian

It is clear that Near Eastern literature had a powerful impact on the Greek epic narrative structure. Both Greek epic and its Near Eastern antecedents share a strong dramatic element based on direct speech. Again, S. Morris discusses this, pointing out that the Homeric convention of combining the narrative voice with the direct speech of the characters has been traced in the Near East all the way back to the second millennium. Moreover, both types of poetry employ formulaic epithets, type-scene repetition, and similes from nature used to describe action in the human world. The performance of Homeric poetry may even have its basis in the Near Eastern banquets held in honour of the dead (the *marzeaḥ*), wherein heroic deeds of the deceased were celebrated in song. It has, for this reason, been argued that the bardic tradition is in fact more Oriental than Greek. Morris says, "In the final analysis, it may be a greater challenge to isolate and appreciate what is Greek in Homeric poetry than to enumerate its foreign sources.[25]

One of the main arguments of this thesis is that death is unknowable to the characters of the poem; it is faceless and impersonal, it cannot be tamed or conceptualized. This particular aspect of death has definite Near Eastern antecedents, and provides an excellent example of how very relevant Near Eastern texts are in relation to the Homeric poems. In the Mesopotamian *Epic of Gilgamesh*, preserved on twelve tablets from the seventh century B.C., (but believed to have originated about a thousand years earlier), we hear Utnapishtim's lament:

> Nobody sees Death,
> Nobody sees the face of Death,
> Nobody hears the voice of Death.
> Savage Death just cuts mankind down.
> Sometimes we build a house, sometimes we make
> a nest,
> But then brothers divide it upon inheritance.
> Sometimes there is hostility in [the land],

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material, however, and I will refer at later points in this thesis to chapter 6 of his book, dedicated to the Near Eastern elements in the *Iliad* (pp. 334-401). Worthy of mention also is Griffin 1992.

[25] Ibid., p. 623.

> But then the river rises and brings flood-water.
> Dragonflies drift on the river,
> Their faces look upon the face of the Sun.
> (But then) suddenly there is nothing.
> The sleeping (?) and the dead are just like each
> other,
> Death's picture cannot be drawn.[26]

Although the fourth to twelfth lines cited here suggest the point is simply that nobody knows when death will strike, the first two lines as well as the last line cited clearly focus on the faceless, impersonal and incomprehensible nature of death. Death's picture cannot be drawn because its nature cannot be known. Such comparisons will be made at various points throughout this work where they apply and seem relevant to the presentation of the *Iliad*. While I am certainly arguing that Homer is a poetic innovator within his own context, this does not in any way mean that he could not also be building on these earlier, well known Eastern poetic traditions, just as he may innovate with respect to the conventions of Greek epic, all the while relying on the established fundamentals of the genre as a point of reference. Joseph A. Russo's observation concerning Homer's innovations within the Greek epic tradition can just as easily be applied to his innovations within earlier, Near Eastern poetic traditions. He says "My thesis is that although Homer conspicuously carries with him many features of his tradition, there are many examples in the two poems of the kind of creative departure from the tradition, or innovative playing with the tradition, that point to the kind of freedom not found in the tradition-bound oral poet."[27]

Having set out the basic structure and methodology that this work follows, I now turn to the subject of mortality within the *Iliad*. Nowhere else in Greek literature are the paradoxes that make up the portrayal of heroic death more clearly drawn. The entire poem invites a critical rethinking of the very values which, on the surface, it seems to support, and these are values upon which its very genre may actually depend. To quote M. West,

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[26] The English translation cited here from the *Epic of Gilgamesh* is taken from column six of tablet ten, and appears in Dalley 1998. A variant translation appears in the verse rendition of the Jackson 1997 p. 75. For the Assyrian version of the text and a commentary, see Thompson 1930. Thompson gives the text of the sixth column of tablet ten on pp. 58-59, and accompanying notes may be found on p. 85.

> Behind the *Iliad* stands a centuries-old tradition of Greek martial epic. The formulaic vocabulary for armour and weapons, for killing and wounding, for chariotry and massed fighting, for heroes who are sackers of cities or famed with the spear, and the notional poetic ideal of celebrating κλέα ἀνδρῶν, the renowned deeds of men, suggest a conventional emphasis on battles and heroic accomplishments in the field. Seen against this presumed background, the *Iliad* seems to represent a remarkable shift in focus. The conventional matter is there in abundance, and the poet knows perfectly well how to draw upon it and fill it with new life. But he uses it largely as a backdrop to a human drama in which actions are less important than the emotions they arouse, and the psychological case-history of an individual occupies the foreground. There is a pervasive sense of mortality and the ultimate futility and tragedy of war which tends to subvert the received values of heroic poetry.[28]

In a very real sense, the poem works against what many view as its own immediate purpose. Whether this is owing to authorial intent, or whether it is simply the case that the complexities of the narrative structure allow us as readers to anticipate alternative meanings, the text opens itself up for a multitude of questions from the audience.[29]

The poem presents a world view in which dying a heroic death is of paramount significance, since for the hero of the epic, a glorious death ensures imperishable κλέος in song, the song that is the epic itself. Κλέος is the best that any mortal can hope to achieve through dying. This is vividly demonstrated in the descriptions of the underworld found in Homeric poetry, wherein in every meaningful sense, there is at best a very

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[27] See p. 278 of Russo 1968.

[28] West 1997 pp. 334-335.

[29] Taplin 1992 discusses popular acceptance of the notion of the 'heroic death' and rejects it as simplifying the matter, saying,

> I am reacting against talk of 'the world of heroes', 'Homeric values', and 'the heroic code'—the widespread supposition that the ethics of the *Iliad* are clear, established, and unanimously accepted by characters and audience alike. This is untenable if only because the participant characters spend so much time and energy on disagreeing about ethics and values. Issues of approval, respect, justification, sanction and their contraries, are open for dispute, both by the characters within the poem, and by the audience outside. It is, indeed, vital to the quality of the poem that such matters are *not* closed. (p. 7)

meager conception of an afterlife. In most passages relating to the fate of the dead in the underworld, only the ψυχή or the εἴδωλον survives, and this part of the individual is not a part that is in any way related to cognitive ability or feeling. We must, however, use a degree of caution when speaking on this subject. Our best source on the Homeric underworld is not the *Iliad* at all, but *Od.* 11, in which we find a detailed κατάβασις, as well as *Od.* 24.1-204. In *Od.* 11 it seems likely that the shades of the departed flit around, incognizant of their former lives or memories, (with the possible exceptions of Tiresias and Ajax), until offered blood. Blood, as the fluid of life itself, is that which distinguishes 'the thirsty' dead from the living who have not yet undergone the drying out process that death entails. Temporarily returned to semi-living status by the blood, the dead are able to recall details of their lives and to articulate these memories in speech. This fact in itself does not mark any great contrast between the view of death in the *Iliad* and that presented in the *Odyssey*. A contrasting view of the afterlife is, however, found in *Od.* 24, wherein the ψυχαί of the dead do converse with one another and do possess the power of memory, although they have been offered no blood to drink. The fact that the *Odyssey* presents two opposing conceptions of the afterlife demonstrates that the Homeric poems likely encompass elements from various poetic lays and periods.

Turning to the *Iliad* itself, the fate of the dead is indeed mentioned quite specifically, although this fate is treated in considerably less detail than it is in the *Odyssey*, and one may suggest that this is specifically because the *Iliad* seeks to downplay the notion of a meaningful afterlife. In *Il.* 23.69-107 the shade of Patroklos tells Achilles of the fate of the unburied dead. This in turn prompts Achilles to make his strange and ambiguous reference to the post mortem survival of the ψυχή or the εἴδωλον (*Il.* 23.103-4), in which he both marvels at the nature of this immortality (ὢ πόποι, ἦ ῥά τίς ἐστι καὶ εἰν ᾿Αΐδαο δόμοισι –'oh man, even in the house of Hades there is something), and laments (ψυχὴ καὶ εἴδωλον, ἀτὰρ φρένες οὐκ ἔνι πάμπαν· –'a shade or an image, but the wits are by no means within it').

Much has been written about the compound soul in Homer, and the fate of each of the different psychological organs at the point of death, although relatively little has been determined as a result of such massive effort.[30] It is generally accepted that all that survives death in Homer is an image, little more than a visual monument to the fact that the individual existed.

Homeric poetry provides an alternative immortality by means of language, insofar as the poem is a monument to the dead. In Greek popular thought, to be remembered and to have one's name live on the lips of generations to come is to have one of the only forms of immortality possible (the other form, of course, is the immortality one achieves through one's children).[31] To be forgotten, unsung and nameless is to enter the realm of utter, complete and final oblivion. In this respect, the picture Homer paints of the afterlife is wholly consistent with the surface function of the poem, namely to bestow poetic immortality and depict it as sufficient reward for brutal and violent death.[32] If there is an afterlife in the full sense of the word, as does develop by the Classical period, for example, the epic loses one of its most important functions as that which bestows immortality. If imperishable fame and glory in song are of paramount value to the living hero, it is because there is no further significance to be found after death. This helps to explain the unquestionably bleak view of the afterlife depicted in the epic; the poem is, in many ways, reinforcing its own position. For this reason, the *Iliad* persistently presents heroes who expound the value of dying in battle. Most often, it is worth noting, such speeches appear in contexts in which the warriors do not face the immediate reality of battle. One may consider, for example, Sarpedon's words:

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[30] The bibliography on Homeric psychology is vast indeed. Of particular interest are the numerous studies of Darcus Sullivan 1979, 1980, 1987 and 1988,

[31] Hence, when Odysseus visits the underworld in *Od.* 11, he attempts to console the shade of Achilles. Achilles, while lamenting the fate of the dead, asks about the fortunes of his living son, and Odysseus cheers him by telling him about Neoptolemos' renown in the world above (lines 505-540).

[32] Rohde 1925 discussed the role of the Homeric afterlife (pp.3-43):

> Homer consistently assumes the departure of the soul into an inaccessible land of the dead where it exists in an unconscious half-life. There it is without clear self-consciousness and consequently neither desires nor wills anything. It has no influence on the upper world, and consequently no longer receives any share of the worship of the living. The dead are beyond the reach of any feelings whether of fear or love. (p. 24)

Rohde remarked further on the relationship between this almost-absent afterlife and poetry:

> If we ask the Homeric poet for what purpose a mound was heaped up over the grave of the dead and a gravestone set upon it, he will answer us: in order that his fame may remain imperishable among men, and that future generations may not be ignorant of his story. That sounds truly Homeric. When a man dies his soul departs into a region of twilit dream-life; his body, the visible man, perishes. Only his glorious name, in fact, lives on. His praises speak to after ages from the monument to his honour on his grave-mound–and in the song of the bard. A *poet* would naturally be inclined to think such things. (p. 43)

> ὦ πέπον, εἰ μὲν γὰρ πόλεμον περὶ τόνδε φυγόντε
> αἰεὶ δὴ μέλλοιμεν ἀγήρω τ’ ἀθανάτω τε
> ἔσσεσθ’, οὔτε κεν αὐτὸς ἐνὶ πρώτοισι μαχοίμην
> οὔτε κε σὲ στέλλοιμι μάχην ἐς κυδιάνειραν·
> νῦν δ’ ἔμπης γὰρ κῆρες ἐφεστᾶσιν θανάτοιο
> μυρίαι, ἇς οὐκ ἔστι φυγεῖν βροτὸν οὐδ’ ὑπαλύξαι,
> ἴομεν, ἠέ τῳ εὖχος ὀρέξομεν, ἠέ τις ἡμῖν. (*Il.* 12.322-328)
>
> Oh man, if on the one hand we, the two of us, having fled this war,
> would always be ageless and immortal,
> then neither would I myself fight in the front,
> nor would I dispatch you to battle bestowing glory on men;
> but now, nevertheless, since the countless spirits of death stand by,
> whom it is not possible for a mortal to flee or shun,
> let us go, and let us hand pride to someone, or (let) someone (hand it) to us.

The *Iliad* is filled with the names of heroes who lose their lives on the battlefield. To these the poem grants eternal glory in song, and the song is self-reflective, speaking about its own function as a cultural memorial to the dead and as a preserver of heroic value systems. Logically, the *Iliad* must deny the possibility of meaningful life after death, since it purports to present the notion that the imperishability of one's name alone must be sufficient recompense for dying.

One might reasonably raise an objection to this statement, in favour of the view that Homer does indeed tell us something of reward and blessing after death. In the *Od.* 11.539 we do in fact find a reference to the ἀσφοδελὸς λειμών (the asphodel meadow) through which Achilles strides. In many respects, the *Odyssey* fills in for the audience what the *Iliad* leaves out, and this particular passage is sometimes interpreted as indicating that there exists in Homer a special fate for those who die with κλέος. It is sometimes assumed that this meadow must be a place of honour and after-death reward for heroes, although the poet certainly does not make this clear in any way. In fact, in antiquity it was sometimes understood to be a ghastly or ash-strewn meadow (Schol. *Od.* 11.539; 24.13). What exactly this place is remains vague, and if it is indeed a place of reward, it is puzzling that Achilles should be so negative about the fate he has received after dying. Regardless, we are never allowed to forget, πάντες μὲν στυγεροὶ θάνατοι δειλοῖσι βροτοῖσι (*Od.* 12.341, 'all deaths are hateful to wretched mortals…'), and we can only assume that this applies even to heroic death. In the *Odyssey*, the only individual specifically mentioned as being granted a special status is Menelaos, who is to be transported without even having undergone the experience of death, to the Elysian Fields where he will dwell free from toils forever (*Od.* 4.561-569). His status is not based on death in battle, since he survives to return home from the war, but rather in his marriage to Helen, daughter of Zeus. However, even if it were conclusively demonstrated that there is in the *Odyssey* a special reward after death for heroes who die in battle, this would in no way undermine the argument that no such reward exists in the *Iliad*. The two poems are very different. While the *Iliad* deals with the issues surrounding dying violently at the peak of youth in the quest for the κλέος which poetry alone has the power to grant, the *Odyssey* is very much a poem about survival, intellect, the proper place of the human being within the context of human society. For this reason, the *Odyssey* does not need to emphasise the bleakness of the afterlife in quite the same way as the *Iliad* does.

However, despite the fact that the *Iliad* shows us a world in which gaining eternal fame is commonly held by the poem's characters to be a worthy recompense for death, the text presents us at the same time with many questions concerning the world it contains, and the assumptions that belong to that world. Much has been written about heroic death and the question of acceptance of death in the poem, yet the poem is much more than a proponent of the values of the aristocratic warrior class, in whose courts bards *might* have originally sung these tales.[33] Heroic death, and the entire heroic value system, come under very close scrutiny.[34] M .Clarke sums up the essence of the poem (and poetry in general) when he says "It seems a good (if unprovable) rule that epic or any other Greek genre should be regarded not as *celebratory* but as *exploratory*."[35]

But how does this tie in with the traditional function of epic as a genre? We are presented with some formidable difficulties when we speak of such things as 'the role of epic', since there is a distinct paucity of texts outside of Homer himself. J. A. Russo, however, argues that the Homeric texts contain many elements of the older epic tradition, and that these elements may be delineated from points of innovation on the part of Homer. He disputes Combellack's unequivocal statement "...We have no device whatever for finding out what *is* new. The new in literature can be discovered only by comparison with the old, and if the old is not in existence, the comparison is impossible."[36] Russo says,

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[33] It is not, however, uncommon to find the poem interpreted in exactly this manner. For example, Morris 1986 discusses what he perceives to be the Homeric text's relationship to history, the world-view presented in the text, and its intended function within the context of Homer's own society. Morris, who argues that the world which Homer presents is based primarily on the social circumstances of his own time, believes the poem to promote a single viewpoint (p. 120). To him, this viewpoint is fundamentally aristocratic, and the *Iliad* is an ideological tool used, as he says, "to legitimize elite domination, presenting it as natural and unchangeable. This, the poet is saying, is how it was in the Heroic Age; this, he is implying, is how it should be now." (pp.124-125).

[34] Lynn-George 1996 discusses this saying,

> In general the heroic epic deals with an idealized past and a past ideal. But the opening of the *Iliad*, in its very dissonance, radically restructures the world. The poem begins not by simply proceeding to present the ideal, but by placing the ideal in jeopardy and in question, in the wake of a split which immediately divides the world. It is a rift of far-reaching significance. The *Iliad* begins with an unexpected, violent and powerful rupture between the world 'as it is' and the world 'as it should be'—a fracture which runs deeply through the vast structure of the epic. (p. 24)

[35] M Clarke, *Flesh and Spirit in the Songs of Homer*, pp. 9-10.

[36] What does survive of the epic cycle tends to be regarded by scholars as being of inferior quality to the Homeric poems. For a brief, if somewhat outdated overview on epic's traditional role see the section on the epic cycle in Bury' 1926. For a more recent treatment, see Griffin's 1977. As there is not enough anterior evidence to allow us to speak of pre-Homeric epic with total confidence, the texts of Homer serve

> The claim that the old is not in existence in Homer can be countered by directing attention to certain types of recurring scenes, whose language is fairly predictable and whose content, we should all agree, is essentially "traditional." I refer to the descriptions of arming, feast and sacrifice, man-to-man combat, launching and beaching a ship, swearing an oath, and so on. It is impossible to imagine anyone claiming that these scenes are original creations of Homer, that is, of the monumental creative poet who gave the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* their final form and meaning. It is, on the contrary, a fairly safe assumption that these passages offer some very old examples of the Greek hexameter tradition. Their language and metrics support this assumption. These verses tend to move in phrases carved out in solid blocks, with very little enjambment, and they often develop a certain monotonous rhythmical similarity, using the same kinds of words—usually verbs and prepositions—in exactly the same part of the line. The effect is familiar to all readers of Homer in Greek, an effect compounded of stiffness and predictability and a somewhat mesmerizing ritual air.[37]

He then continues,

> But it is most important to have the "typical" and traditional in Homer so clearly set out, since it simplifies the task of identifying and analyzing the *innovative* and the *atypical*...If Homer is not fully within, he is at least *close to*, an oral tradition, and the pressure of something like an oral law would account for the existence of the "typical scenes" and the other examples of lengthy verbatim repetition...[38]

It is in surveying "the wide range of relationships between the 'typical' and the 'untypical' in Homer [that] we can begin to appreciate the tension that exists between *tradition* and *invention* in these poems."[39]

Presuming the *Iliad* does mark a point of poetic advancement, it is fair to assume that this advancement may be not only stylistic but also ideological. If earlier epic dealt with the heroic code, it is possible that the *Iliad* treats the same topic, but with considerably more sophistication than its predecessors. The *Iliad* achieves the effect of acting as the promised memorial for the dead, and for heroic value systems, yet it consistently emphasises the brutality and pathos of death. It is constantly questioning and testing the strengths of the very values it preserves.

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as both evidence for the epic tradition and as evidence for the poet's own poetic uniqueness within it. Combellack 1965, for his remarks see p. 55.

[37] Russo 1968 pp. 279-280.

[38] Ibid. p. 280.

[39] Ibid p. 294.

Heroic death in the poem can be considered on two levels; the real and the imaginative. On one hand, for both poet and audience, death exists as a harsh and brutal fact, but it also exists at the same time as a cultural construct which invites both poetic and philosophical consideration. The inescapable, biological reality that all mortal creatures die is therefore contrasted with what a culture attempts to make of this fact.

The poem looks at violent death unflinchingly, seldom attempting to make it gentle or beautiful, while also examining the entire cultural overlay of the heroic code that seeks to imbue violent death, war and waste with a sense of meaning which can transcend the physical reality of dying. While one must be careful not to present the distinction between the poet and the culture he portrays as being too clear cut (the poem is both *of* the culture and *about* the culture), any artistic work is contrived. As an artificial, representational construct, a poem must always stand as an outside perspective looking in on the culture that produces it and is in turn portrayed and reflected within it. In this respect one may even say death is considered on a third, poetic, level that is quite distinct from both the cultural treatment of death within the world of the poem and the reality of death as biological process. The poem operates on all three levels at once, and treats death from multiple points of view.

This meaning in death that the culture of the Homeric world bestows is exclusive. It is the prerogative only of the warrior class. For normal mortals, death lacks even this significance. For the hero of the Homeric epic, the sole recipient of this special death, this significance does not always stand up to rigorous scrutiny. The epic is the hero's immortality, and it appears to say of itself that it may not be enough. It raises questions concerning the adequacy of the world that has created it and its own adequacy as a compensation for the shortcomings of that world.

It is no coincidence that the poem opens with the onset of a plague, a plague that can be read as an image for the entire work, underlining the universality of death and the limitations of the heroic code. When Apollo shoots his arrows, people are struck down ingloriously alongside their animals. As they never behold the face of their killer, he who shoots from afar, they are left with no opportunity to perish in heroic confrontation and there is no possibility of achieving a heroic death.[40]

This is of vital importance, because the poem presents cultural shapes of death which have a profound impact on Greek culture throughout its history. In fact, one wonders if the afterlife as envisioned in the Graeco-Roman world in the centuries to follow is a direct reaction against the afterlife defined by the so-called heroic model. Aside from its sheer exclusivity to the upper classes, the *Iliad* presents death in a way that seems to promise too little. Homer himself may be the starting point where the questioning of the exclusive, aristocratic approach to the meaning of death begins. The *Iliad* gives the audience a world within which the individual should seemingly accept that he matters only insofar as he is part of the successive cycle of death and birth played out by countless generations, as we are told, like leaves on the trees.[41] Despite this, the heroes of the poem do in fact believe, and indeed articulate the belief, that they count for more (as Achilles says, οὐ γὰρ ἐμοὶ ψυχῆς ἀντάξιον οὐδ᾽ ὅσα φασὶν / Ἴλιον ἐκτῆσθαι, εὖ ναιόμενον πτολίεθρον, *Il.* 9.401-402, 'For not worthy of my life is however much they say / Ilion possessed, the well settled city…')

If the poem raises questions concerning the value of the heroic death, and hence its own role as the means by which heroic glory is assured, then in a sense one may argue that the *Iliad* is also a monument to itself. The *Iliad* is a σῆμα to Hektor, to all of the dead, to an entire age and the values it embraced, and it may even be a σῆμα to epic as a living form of poetic expression, if those who argue that the committing of these poems to writing does indeed herald the decline of the oral tradition are correct (and this matter is much debated).[42]

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[40] For a discussion of this issue, see Blickman1987.

[41] Homer, *Iliad*, book 6:

οἵη περ φύλλων γενεή, τοίη δὲ καὶ ἀνδρῶν.
φύλλα τὰ μέν τ᾽ ἄνεμος χαμάδις χέει, ἄλλα δέ θ᾽ ὕλη
τηλεθόωσα φύει, ἔαρος δ᾽ ἐπιγίγνεται ὥρη·
ὣς ἀνδρῶν γενεὴ ἡ μὲν φύει ἡ δ᾽ ἀπολήγει. (146-149)

For as are the generations of leaves, even so are those of men.
The storm of winter scatters the leaves, but the
Flourishing tree grows anew, when the season of spring comes to pass;
So while a generation of men perishes, another is born.

The *Iliad*, in its questioning of heroic ideals, will certainly find company among other Archaic texts. Consider, for example, the famous lines of Archilochos' *Fragment 6*:

> ἀσπίδι μὲν Σαΐων τις ἀγάλλεται, ἣν παρὰ θάμνῳ
> ἔντος ἀμώμητον κάλλιπον οὐκ ἐθέλων,
> αὐτὸν δ' ἐξεσάωσα. τί μοι μέλει ἀσπὶς ἐκείνη;
> ἐρρέτω· ἐξαῦτις κτήσομαι οὐ κακίω.
>
> Someone of the Thacians delights in my shield, which blameless gear,
> by a bush, I left behind unwillingly,
> But I saved myself. What concern is that shield to me?
> Let it go; I will procure again for myself one no worse.

Nevertheless, N. Loraux has suggested that the heroic ideal not only exists in Homer, but that it is the starting point for the continuity of an ideology which extends down throughout Greece's history, and which is fundamental in the rise of the city-state.[43] However, personal lyric poetry, by virtue of the fact that it deals with the subjective experience, need not contain any one, unified ideology. While Loraux's claims work well when considered alongside the works of poets such as Kallinos (*Fragment 1*) and Tyrtaeus (*Fragments 11* and *12*), they do not find support in the works of Archilochos or Sappho, each of whom possesses an entirely different type of aesthetic. Sappho is not a war poet, yet it is worth noting the famous *Fragment 16*, in which she deliberately places the glories of battle in a secondary position to the subjective experience of desire. Sappho uses typically Homeric imagery to create a list of things considered κάλλιστα according to the Homeric ἔθος, and sets at the heart of it Helen, who, in the heroic tradition was the cause of so much woe. Rather than vilifying Helen, however, Sappho deals with the personal experience of love (whether the "I" who speaks is personal or poetic), and uses Helen as an example of the single-minded pursuit of the object of desire. Helen's experience is used as a justification and explanation of the speaker's own experience, in which the beloved is more beautiful than any military display which might bring glory to men. There are no objective standards for excellence, although Homeric imagery remains, owing to long standing tradition, as a universally understood reference point. Sappho is fully capable of constructing her own ἔθος, in which the κλέα ἀνδρῶν are not central, (indeed, in *Fragment 16* they are only present for the purpose of comparison).[44]

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[42] Many still agree that writing fundamentally changes the nature of the poem, fixing an authoritative version of the text, the existence of which all too easily may infringe upon performance innovations. This stance is far from new. Lord 1960 argued that the distinctions between the oral and written poetic forms are marked, saying "the two techniques are...contradictory and mutually exclusive. Once the oral technique is lost, it is never regained. The written technique...is not compatible with the oral technique, and the two could not possibly combine to form another, a third, a 'transitional' technique" (p. 129). However, much of Lord's work has been overturned in recent years, and Nagy 1996 argues strongly against his view of the relationship between written and oral poetics saying "whatever poetry might have been transcribed in this era still has to be defined in terms of oral poetics, that is, it has to be viewed as resulting from a fundamental interplay between the dimensions of composition and performance", and moreover,

> ...there is no evidence for assuming that the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, as compositions, resulted from the writing down of a text. The point remains that the writing down of a composition as a text does not mean that writing was a prerequisite for the text's composition—*so long as the oral tradition that produced it continued to stay alive*. Moreover, the writing down of any kind of composition that could otherwise be produced in performance will not necessarily freeze the process of recomposition-in-performance" (p. 68).

[43] For discussion of the possible use of Homer for the promotion of civic-ideology, see her 1986 book p. 61.

Clearly, if one wishes to look for traces of continuity of epic ideology in literature, the evidence varies. This is not surprising since the heroic value system is both attested to and examined by the poet of the *Iliad*.

In the *Odyssey*, as well, one sees heroic death being questioned fairly explicitly. Achilles clearly regrets choosing heroic death over long life, saying to Odysseus:

> μὴ δή μοι θάνατόν γε παραύδα, φαίδιμ' 'Οδυσσεῦ.
> βουλοίμην κ' ἐπάρουρος ἐὼν θητευέμεν ἄλλῳ,
> ἀνδρὶ παρ' ἀκλήρῳ, ᾧ μὴ βίοτος πολὺς εἴη,

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[44] Her sensibilities are reminiscent of the lament of the women in *Il.* 24, which also question the ultimate value of the warrior code.

ἢ πᾶσιν νεκύεσσι καταφθιμένοισιν ἀνάσσειν. (*Od.* 11. 488-491)[45]

Do not speak lightly of death to me, glorious Odysseus,
I would prefer to be a serf, existing upon the land of another,
A needy man, to whom is there is not a great livelihood,
Than to rule over all the perished dead.

The *Odyssey*, as already discussed, is a very different type of poem from the *Iliad*. The *Odyssey* is very much a poem of the πόλις, with its emphasis on the importance of one's place in the proper human sphere within the bounds of civilization. Moreover, Odysseus is truly a new model hero, with his determination to survive into old age. Glorious death in battle is not what makes him famous nor beloved of Athena. Cunning is Odysseus' trademark virtue; a capacity for thought as opposed to simple action. Values clearly differ from those displayed in the *Iliad*, and yet, this questioning of death for the sake of honour, which is relatively clear in the *Odyssey* and very explicit in some of the later lyric poets, may *start* with the *Iliad*.

The *Iliad* is a poem which approaches the topic of death with an interplay between defiance and acceptance, consolation and dread. There is a heroic ideal of death, and yet the poem reflects upon this very possibility. The biological fact of death exists on the human level but is shaped on a cultural level by the heroic ideal. The heroic ideal exists within the world contained by the poem, and the questioning of that ideal belongs to the construct that is the poem, containing and assessing that world within it. At the same time, the poem is a product of the culture which produced it, and it is, to some extent, contained and shaped by this culture. All levels work together and yet function independently; that of nature, what culture makes of nature, what the poet makes of the culture, and how the poet is in turn limited by the values of the very culture he assesses. The result is an astonishingly sophisticated and complex picture of heroic death and its implications, and the multiple layers of the narrative stucture are indeed a perfect vehicle, and even a fitting metaphor, for the multiple aspects of death which are ever-present in the world of the poem.

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[45] All passages cited are taken from Homer, *Odyssey*, ed. Allen, 1917).

Chapter 2

Naming Death

I can see only death and more death, till we are black and swollen with death.

D. H. Lawrence, Letter, June 1915. Published in *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence*, vol 2, ed. by George J. Zytaruk and James T. Boulton, 1981

The poem deals with the subject of death by one of three means; it names death or it describes death, and in some passages death is both named and described. Most often, however, when death is present in name it is not present in fact, and when it is present in fact it is most often not present in name.

One of the points I hope to make clear throughout this work is that death terms in themselves represent but one aspect of Homeric death. There are many ways other than direct naming in which the poet addresses this subject, and the broader scope of the language of death will be visited in later chapters.

I turn first to the naming of death, and therefore provide at this point a survey of the scholarship that has been performed on the most common terms for 'death' within the *Iliad*, and the range of meanings each of these terms possesses. The purpose of this chapter is to explore the nuances of the various death terms, with a view to understanding why the poet does or does not use them in any given context. Homer has a variety of terms at his disposal to indicate the end of a mortal's existence. As true synonyms may be said not to exist (as I shall discuss shortly), it is helpful to consider the distinct tone that each term conveys, for this distinction, along with metrical necessity, is likely the factor that determines what word is used at any given point in the text.

Several of the terms for death have other possible meanings which are context-dependent, and some of these alternate meanings are completely unrelated to the concept of death. As this is a study on death terms rather than a comprehensive etymological and philological study of the terms as a whole, in all their complexity, meanings unconnected to death will not be treated.

I should also at this point clarify why I have focused only on the death-terms that I have. While there are other terms for death that do make their appearance in the poem (such as οἶτος and φόνος, for example), they are not nearly so common-place as the terms upon which I have focused. Since the scope of this project had to be limited by some boundaries, I opted to consider only the death-terms that are most prevalent. I do not think that this impacts my argument in any significant way, however, as the omitted words (used within the sort of contexts in which I am interested) are few in their appearances in the text. Similarly, I have chosen not to treat verbal forms for 'killing' as they appear in scenes where death is not named, instead focusing solely on nouns for the duration of this study (although in surveying all death-passages, I observed that such verbs most often appear in non- immediate contexts regardless).

Distinct as each of the 'death' terms is, several of them nevertheless share a connective thread. Aside from τέλος and θάνατος, the death terms in Homer are all linked directly to the concept of 'fate'. The association may be understood as being quite natural; for all mortals the fate that awaits is death. There is more to it than that, however. The three Fates were considered to be birth spirits, among other things, allotting destiny to each newborn child. As this necessitates a determination of the length of life, the Fates come to be more commonly viewed as death spirits. In a roundabout way, Fate as an abstract, impersonal concept also came to be closely interconnected with death. The length of one's life is one's fate, the culmination of fate is death. The two are indivisible.

Of the 'fate/death' words, πότμος, αἶσα and μοῖρα are often metrically equivalent, although this depends entirely on whether the preceding word ends with a consonant and on the vowel/consonant variance at the end of the word itself. Κήρ is, on the other hand, always metrically distinct. We are safe in concluding that in some contexts the poet has a specific reason for the choice he makes when one of these words appears. What then, are the characteristics of each?

One important consideration for work on the Homeric diction is the question of synonymy. Therefore, it is worth considering the following:

> (Nevertheless) it is perfectly true that absolute synonymy runs counter to our whole way of looking at language. When we see different words we instinctively assume that there must be some difference in meaning, and in the vast majority of cases there is in fact a distinction even though it may be difficult to formulate. Very few words are completely synonymous in the sense of being interchangeable in any context without the slightest alteration in objective meaning, feeling-tone, or evocative value.[1]

This obviously needs to be taken into account when examining the various implications of terms such as μοῖρα, αἶσα, πότμος, κήρ, θάνατος, and τέλος and as well as the epithets that accompany them.[2]

This work seeks, among other things, to examine the poetic and stylistic nuances of the various words and phrases for death, and thereby consider the poetic dimensions of death with emphasis upon how these themes are articulated. Death is presented in the poem as elusive, ever shifting and wearing many faces, some almost benevolent (e.g. the gentle Θάνατος who accompanies and is in many respects associated with Ὕπνος), and others brutal. There is always a multiplicity of attitudes presented in the *Iliad*, and this is captured in Sarpedon's speech, in which he says νῦν δ᾽ ἔμπης γὰρ κῆρες ἐφεστᾶσιν θανάτοιο / μυρίαι, κ.τ.λ. (12. 326-327, 'But now, nevertheless, the countless spirits of death stand near…').[3] These 'multiple fates of death' may be a reference to *instances* of death, but may also simultaneously be a reference to *aspects* of death. In one sense, both interpretations amount to the same thing, since each instance of death is unique and bears a distinctive aspect in the poem. It is this quality, the prolific multiplicity of forms that death takes within the poem, upon which I focus.

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[1] S. Ullmann 1962 p. 142. Consider also the following, taken from the same work (p. 151):

> The possibility of choosing between two or more alternatives is fundamental to our modern conception of style, and synonymy affords one of the most clear-cut examples of such choice. If more than one word is available for the expression of the same idea, the writer will select the one which is best suited to the context: the one which will carry the right amount of emotion and emphasis, which will fit most harmoniously into the phonetic structure of the sentence, and which will be best attuned to the general tone of the utterance.

[2] It is worth noting that the epithets used with words for death in Homer are typically negative. For example, we find δυσηλεγέα (painful), δυσηχέος (hateful), and θυμοραϊστής (life destroying). Vernant 1991 argues for the notion of *la belle mort* (see pp. 50-74), claiming that heroic death is, in the full sense of the word *belle*, both aesthetically and ethically good. Nonetheless, the epithets found with names for death cause one to wonder if a beautiful death (in either sense of the word) is truly possible.

No Homeric death term possesses so many variations and shades of meaning as μοῖρα, and few have been discussed so extensively. Potential meanings cover the spectrum of 'portion', 'lot', 'inheritance', 'that which is one's due', 'destiny', 'fate', and 'doom' and consequently, 'death'. Μοῖρα is used to indicate personal fate (i.e. death), but it is also used as a term for the general, abstract fate which governs cosmic order. *LSJ* s.v. says of it "one's portion in life, lot, destiny…mostly of ill-fortune, but also of good…like μόρος, man's appointed doom, i.e. death…". Cunliffe refers to it as "One's portion or lot in life, one's fate or destiny, what is allotted by fate….Fate that comes upon or overtakes one, evil fate, death, doom…"[4] Also common as a variation on μοῖρα is μόρος. Although I will not treat this word specifcally in this chapter, passages in which it appears will be considered in chapter 3.

Interpretations relating exclusively to the concept of cosmic fate range from a belief that μοῖρα is a personified active force, an impersonal abstract power stronger than

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[3] As Hainsworth 1993 comments, the κήρ in this passage is a death demon, more personified than μοῖρα tends to be (p. 353).

[4] For a summary of the various meanings for each of the Homeric terms for death, see Chantraine, *Dictionnaire étymologique*, s.v., *LSJ* s.v., the *Lexikon des frühgriechischen Epos*, s.v. and Cunliffe, *A Lexicon of the Homeric Dialect*, s.v. The word μοῖρα appears forty-seven times in the *Iliad*, and twenty-four of those appearances refer directly or indirectly to death. Ten of these uses are in hendiadys with θάνατος (Il. 3.101, 5.83, 16.334, and 853, 17.478, and 672, 20.477, 21.110, 22.436 and 24.132), one appears with the genitive θανάτοιο τέλοσδε (*Il.* 13.602) and one appears with the infinitive θανεῖν (*Il.* 7.52). Hence, μοῖρα used to denote an apportioned share of destiny (as death), by itself accounts for just over half of all uses. Various other uses combined account for the remaining appearances (for example, in

Zeus himself, or to the belief that μοῖρα is one and the same as the will of Zeus. It is not my intention to deal with μοῖρα as abstract, cosmic fate, however. I shall focus instead on μοῖρα as personal fate (i.e. death).

Of central importance on the topic of μοῖρα as personal fate (and the other 'fate/death' words in general) is B. C. Dietrich's *Death, Fate and the Gods*. In this most thorough and useful source on the various 'fate/death' terms, Dietrich begins his discussion of μοῖρα in Homer by drawing a distinct line between the two epics. As a poem of war, the *Iliad* quite logically deals much more frequently with the subject of death than does the *Odyssey*, and it is for this reason that μοῖρα in the *Iliad* is usually connected to death, while this is not at all the case in the second Homeric epic. Instances of μοῖρα in the *Iliad* are classified into two basic subdivisions: those in which μοῖρα is an active agent or deity dealing out death (the cause) and those in which μοῖρα is a term used to designate death itself (the effect). My work confirms that Dietrich's subdivisions are correct and viable. As a personal agent of death, μοῖρα is quantifiable. As an impersonal force it is not. It is completely unknowable. As the effect (death itself), μοῖρα is used with such negative epithets as κραταιή, (powerful), ὀλοή and ὀλοιή, (destructive), κακή, (evil) and δυσώνυμος, (wretched) and often linked in hendiadys with the noun θάνατος.[5] This μοῖρα, as Dietrich puts it "comes close to the idea of a general fate whose origin is unknown".[6]

Μοῖρα as an active agent is less common, but not unattested. The Μοῖραι, capitalized and plural, do indeed make their appearance in the *Iliad*, so it is arguable that at least on rare occasions they are active agents (and perhaps deities). J. Duffy, in his article "Homer's Conception of Fate", attempts to dismiss the evidence of the two

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Il. 10.253, μοῖρα is twice used to refer to a portion of the night, and in *Il.* 16.68 it is used to denote a portion of land).

[5] Dietrich 1965 pp. 194-195.

instances in which some scholars believe that μοῖρα is personified within Homeric epic (*Il.* 24.49, 209), and hence argues that it is best not interpreted as an independent entity responsible for and distinct within itself. For him, μοῖρα, like αἶσα, is never overtly mentioned by Homer as a goddess, nor does it appear with any typical sort of epithet one would expect to find in conjunction with mention of a deity, nor is its mythological parentage ever stated. He argues that μοῖρα is not an active participant in the poem, but is something which is performed or brought to fulfillment, and that there is no act ascribed to μοῖρα anywhere in the poem which is in fact not carried out by Zeus or the gods. In short, he claims, μοῖρα lacks all characteristics which may be ascribed to a person. He contrasts this with ὕπνος or θάνατος, who are active beings who transport the dead Sarpedon from the battlefield, with ἄτη, who is described as strong and fleet of foot, and with a personal θέμις.[7]

Why should this be the case? J. Duffy argues that there is no need for a deified μοῖρα, for μοῖρα and the will of Zeus are indistinguishable, and there is no clear evidence to suggest that fate exists as a power greater than or separate from the gods. He treats summarily some of the scholarly works in which this conviction has been put forward, and dismisses them, saying the following:

> Some critics believe that in the poems fate is absolute and stands above the gods. One critic maintains that Zeus is at one time subject to Moira, and that at another time he takes her place as he spins out to men their fortune. Others say that the will of Zeus and fate are the same. Still others believe that fate and religion in general are used by Homer to suit his poetic needs.
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> However, Homer does not state that the power of fate is disassociated from Zeus and that it is an independent power in itself. Anything that is effected by fate in the poems is also accomplished by the divine power which represents the highest deity, Zeus. There is no passage in the poems which unequivocally states that the gods are subordinated to

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[6] Ibid, p.200.

[7] Duffy 1947 pp. 482-483.

> fate. There are several passages in both poems which show that Zeus sends Moira...[8]

These arguments, which downplay μοῖρα as an active agent, link it with the will of Zeus and hence render it as yet another example of 'cosmic fate'. Duffy is quite correct when he argues that μοῖρα is presented as an impersonal force in both of the Homeric epics far more often than it is presented as personified (much less as a deity in its own right).[9] Regardless of the fact that Duffy's attempts to downplay the rare appearances of the Μοῖραι in the poem seem somewhat specious, in the vast majority of instances moῖρα does indeed appear as singular and non-capitalized, and as such μοῖρα is often a death term, seemingly lacking all personal agency. For this reason, the view that the word indicates an impersonal, unknowable force (and one which I would argue need not be identical to the will of Zeus) would seem to me to be most logical. Furthermore, portrayed as it is as an impersonal agent, μοῖρα most frequently refers to death. It is often, for this reason, linked closely with θάνατος, either in hendiadys or with the genitive. In both cases, θάνατος clarifies and completes the meaning of μοῖρα as 'the fate which is intimately associated with death' or as 'the fate which consists of death'.[10]

Αἶσα is frequently looked upon by scholars as being a virtual synonym for μοῖρα, and indeed on quick inspection there does seem to be very little discernable distinction between the range of meanings for the two words. There is in fact perhaps no other Homeric word related to death that comes so close to being a true synonym for another word. Nonetheless, we must expect to find variations in the shades and ranges of each word's meaning.

LSJ s.v. defines αἶσα as "like *Moira*, the divinity who dispenses to everyone his lot or fate".... a "decree or dispensation of a god" ..."one's appointed lot, fate destiny", and, like κατὰ μοῖραν, "fitly, duly".[11] P. Chantraine says of it "part", "lot", "la part accordée par Zeus, et finalement le sens de destinée, *Od.* 5.113 où le mot est rapproché de μοῖρα sans différence de sens".[12] Cunliffe treats it in much the same way he does μοῖρα, referring to it as "One's portion or lot in life, one's fate or destiny…Fate that comes upon or overtakes one, evil fate, doom, death…".[13] C. M. Bowra says, "αἶσα is used by Homer in the sense of 'share' both with ἐλπίδος (Π 101, T 84) and with ληίδος (Σ 327, E 40, N 138): elsewhere it means 'fate.'"[14] J. Duffy similarly likens αἶσα το μοῖρα, saying:

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[8] Ibid, p. 477.

[9] The views of Duffy, among others, are discussed in Pötscher 1960.

> *Aisa* is another word which Homer uses for fate or destiny. It is used in the same way as *Moira*. It is used in the impersonal construction on several occasions in both poems. In the *Odyssey* it is entirely concerned with the homecoming of Odysseus, but in the *Iliad* it brings death or means death. It is used appellatively in the same way as *Moira* either as the subject or object of a verb. It also means 'part,' 'share,' or 'lot.' In its meaning 'share' or 'portion' it may apply to the most diverse things. It is also found in conjunction with prepositions and is modified by the same kinds of adjectives as *Moira* is.[15]

C. Sourvinou-Inwood similarily treats αἶσα as completely interchangeable with μοῖρα, and notes passages in which they are both represented as spinning a man's destiny at his birth.[16] G. Nagy also assumes a synonymous relationship between αἶσα and μοῖρα in contexts wherein μοῖρα carries the sense of 'fate',[17] as does E. R. Dodds.[18]

Yet a subtle distinction may be made. Related to ἴσος, αἶσα implies the notion of fairness, that which is equitable and dispensed in proper proportion, and this is an

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[10] Duffy, p. 478.

[11] LSJ, αἶσα s.v.

[12] Chantraine, *Dictionnaire étymologique*, αἶσα s.v.

[13] Cunliffe, s.v.

[14] Bowra 1926 p. 173).

[15] Duffy 1947 p.480.

[16] Sourvinou-Inwood 1983. She notes the following examples; *Il.* 6.487-9, 7.44-52, 20.330-6, *Od.* 5.113-5, 436. Greene 1944 also remarks on this similarity, p. 16.

[17] Nagy1979 p. 134. Nagy also refers the reader to Lee 1961, especially pp. 196-197 for consideration of parallel uses of αἶσα and μοῖρα in expressions for 'according to destiny'. See, for example, *Il.* 3.59 ff., 17.716 ff., 1.286 ff., and 20.336. Lee also attests to the fact that μοῖρα and αἶσα are identical in meaning and interchangeable in usage, p. 196.

association which μοῖρα lacks. Μοῖρα conveys a sense of what is *allotted* by fate whether for right or wrong, (the term is morally neutral), while αἶσα conveys the sense of what is *fair* and *right*. B. C. Dietrich discusses the word's etymological root and its relationship to ἴσασασθαι, claiming that αἶσα was originally used to denote a share of sacrificial meat (i.e. the portion that was fair and right, not necessarily the portion that was allotted).[19] The word later developed to indicate a (just) 'share' of a destiny derived from some supernatural agency or unknown source.[20] As Dietrich points out, only these two words in Homer possess the sense of 'share' as well as 'fate', and they are the only two nouns used to express the idea of the 'share that consists of fate'.[21] Although in such cases μοῖρα and αἶσα come close to meaning the same thing, αἶσα may be used to denote a death that is equitable and fair, while μοῖρα need not imply these characteristics. This is not to say that justice is necessarily precluded from μοῖρα, merely that it is not indicated.

Πότμος, another 'fate/death' word, also suffers from over-zealousness on the part of scholars who argue for synonymy. Acccording to *LSJ* s.v., it is more or less a synonym for μοῖρα (as used in certain contexts, at any rate). Their entry for this word reads "that which befalls one, one's lot, destiny", "evil destiny; esp. of death". P. Chantraine, meanwhile, says of it "ce qui tombe sur quelqu'un, destin; chez Hom. destin malheureux, désignant la mort".[22] According to Cunliffe, it is "What befalls one, one's lot or fate…evil fate or destiny, bane, death.."[23] Μοῖρα, however, may be used to express other ideas as well (for example, it is sometimes used to denote a share in property or booty, as discussed earlier). Πότμος may not. There has not been much specific research

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[18] Dodds 1951 p.8.
[19] Dietrich 1965 p. 11-12.
[20] Ibid, p. 184.
[21] Ibid, pp. 207-208.
[22] Chantraine, *Dictionnaire étymologique*, p. 906.
[23] Cunliffe s.v.

dedicated solely to πότμος, and it is useful to refer again to Dietrich's *Death, Fate and the Gods*. He is one of the few scholars who treats πότμος independently, and he discusses the word's etymology, explaining that it belongs to the root *pet-*, meaning 'what is falling'. Dietrich suggests that the word πότμος might therefore mean 'the lot that falls to one', although he discusses alternate views, namely, that πότμος denotes the falling of the body, and hence, death. Although it is used in much the same way as μοῖρα, the two words originate in entirely different ideas (μοῖρα being from the root **smer-*, 'think, consider, care', and thereby, eventually, 'portion' or 'lot', 'because it is 'that which is one's care').[24] It is also frequently used in much the same way as αἶσα and οἶτος. For Dietrich, these words are used in Homer to render the various aspects of fate that often overlap one another, and are easily employed side by side.[25] Furthermore, he claims that the various words for 'fate' and thereby 'death' in the poem usually describe the particular experience of a hero, and they tend to be phrased in impersonal terms, leaving their determining source unclear.[26] In the *Iliad*, πότμος itself is always used in relation to death, although it is associated with the adjectives ἄποτμος and πανάποτμος, which, rather like ἄμμορος, may mean merely 'hapless' or 'unfortunate'. Twice in the *Iliad* πότμος occurs with the aorist of ἀναπίμπλημι, to mean 'to fill, accomplish one's fate', and therefore, 'to die'. It is also used with the future and aorist tenses of ἐφέπω, 'to face or encounter one's fate which consists of death', in which cases it is at times used in conjunction with θάνατος and its cognates, twice in hendiadys in *Il.* 2.359 and 15.495, and once with μοῖρα θανεῖν in *Il.* 7.52.[27] Dietrich makes no significant distinction between uses of this word in the *Iliad* and uses in the *Odyssey*.[28] Only a subtle distinction may be made with uses of πότμος in the two epics, that being that in the *Odyssey*, it is sometimes used with a form of ἐφίημι, and when this occurs, there is always a human agent inflicting death.[29] Πότμος, meanwhile, is listed in the lexica as appearing with none of the other, highly specific uses to which μοῖρα may be put. It is a less flexible, less context dependent word than μοῖρα.

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[24] Dietrich 1965 pp. 11-12. Further discussion of the etymology and meanings of πότμος may be found in Chantraine's *Dictionnaire étymologique*, s.v.

[25] Ibid, p.281.

[26] Ibid, p. 283.

[27] A very brief discussion of the various words for death in Homer, including πότμος, may be found in Smerdel 1957.

It is interesting to compare the number of instances in which the poet opts to use μοῖρα to the number of instances in which he opts to use πότμος. The latter and its derivatives are used with far less frequency, and are usually not in the nominative (the majority of cases, are in fact in the accusative, unlike μοῖρα, which is very often found in the nominative). The poet is not the only one who seems to prefer μοῖρα in the majority of instances; so too do scholars. While there is a significant amount of worthy research on μοῖρα and all of its related words, varying connotations and ramifications, comparatively little work has been done on πότμος. Somehow, it has become the most overlooked of the 'fate/death' words.

While μοῖρα is at times personified, πότμος is not, and unlike the former, which may be used with a sense of horror, πότμος seems emotionally neutral.[30] While Chantraine, *LSJ* and Cunliffe all refer to πότμος as evil and dread, Homer in fact *never* uses it with such powerfully negative epithets (as he does, for example, with μοῖρα), and one must wonder at the distressing connotations being claimed for it. Indeed, in Aesychlus *Pers*. 709 it appears in a positive light as εὐτυχει πότμῳ. As already mentioned, Homer uses relatively weak terms with this word, denoting concepts such as 'regrettable' or 'unfortunate'. It is a somewhat colourless term in comparison with other fate/death words, perhaps, but nonetheless one which the poet feels inclined to use on a periodic basis, and as such, one which we must attempt to understand.

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[28] Dietrich 1965 pp. 270-272.
[29] Ibid, pp. 278-279.
[30] Dietrich 1965 p. 281.

If μοῖρα is the fate that is allotted to an individual (divorced from any notion of fairness), it suggests active agency on the part of some unknown power which is doing the allotting. If αἶσα is the portion that is fair and right, it too suggests active agency (we may imagine some cosmic force measuring out what is ἴσος–the word's etymology implies intelligent action). Πότμος, however, as 'that which befalls one', or death owing to the 'dropping of the body', is more passive and neutral in sense because there is no implication of deliberation or intent on the part of any supernatural force. It may be for this reason that πότμος is emotionally neutral in the passages in which it appears. It is just the fate of death that happens inexplicably, but there is no agent of malice behind it to make it more terrifying.[31]

Κήρ, on the other hand, is the 'fate/death' word which is anything but neutral. Its aggressively terrifying nature is overt, far more so than either μοῖρα or αἶσα, for that matter. It is perhaps the most active and hostile of the death terms, and the death it denotes is a violent one. It is a polluting element.

Like μοῖρα, κήρ is nonetheless a word that may possess a variety of meanings. *LSJ* sv. defines it as denoting the goddess of death or of fate, and hence doom, death, destruction, as well as the goddess of mischief or evil, and hence bane, mischief, evil itself or any evil fate, disease, and when used of moral evil, disgrace. P. Chantraine says of it "il participe à la fois aux notions de destin, de mort et de démon personnel", "comme appellatif le mot équivaut à *mort*, principalement *mort violente*".[32] Cunliffe says it is "Bane, death...one's destined fate...".[33]

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[31] In this respect, it is much like the post-Homeric τύχη, which also refers to that which befalls one, for good or evil. While τύχη may certainly bestow undesirable fortunes on mortals, it may similarly be a great boon. The term is in itself morally neutral, and is dependent on context for its true connotation. For detail see *LSJ*, τύχη s.v.

Lee's is one of the most frequently cited works on the subject of κήρ, and he traces the scholarship on this word and its various interpretations at the hands of etymologists, discussing its emergence in the lexica as what he views as being the equivalent of 'fate' or 'death', its transformation into a 'death-goddess', and its eventual acceptance as 'doom' (the element of 'fate' being eliminated)[34] He argues against acceptance of the word as meaning 'death goddess', saying:

> ...it looks as if the great change in the value given to κήρ has come about by the word's being put on the etymologist's bed of Procrustes: κήρ must be connected with κεραΐζω and κεραυνός; ergo it must mean *destruction* (so honestly Curtius); but this is changed later to *death* (without explanation)."[35]

Lee argues that the primary sense of κήρ must be 'fate' or 'destiny', and 'death' (i.e. 'the fate of') a secondary meaning. For him, μοῖρα, αἶσα and κήρ are all nouns for 'fate' in Homer, μοῖρα being from the **(s)mer* root meaning 'part', 'apportionment', 'allotment', 'fate', αἶσα derived perhaps from αἴνυμαι (although he himself questions this) or αἰτία, meaning 'measure', 'part', 'allotment', or 'fate', and κήρ derived from the root **(s)qer*, similarly giving it the same semantic range, meaning 'part', 'allotment', 'lot' and 'fate'. The secondary meaning of 'destruction' occurred through a supposed connection with κεραΐζω, and owing to the secondary meaning of κείρω, 'to consume'.[36] For Lee, therefore, no problem with synonymy exists, and μοῖρα, αἶσα and κήρ are identical in meaning and interchangeable in usage.[37] As has already been discussed in this work, however, true synonymy is problematic, and each of the 'death/fate' words can and should be considered as possessing unique connotations.

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[32] Chantraine, *Dictionnaire étymologique*, κήρ s.v.

[33] Cunliffe, κήρ s.v.

[34] p. 191, Lee 1961.

[35] Ibid, p.193.

[36] Ibid, pp. 194-195. Nussbaum 1986 also discusses the two possible etymologies pp. 66-69. For further comment, see Chantraine's *Dictionnaire étymologique*, s.v.

Dietrich devotes an entire chapter to κήρ and the κῆρες in Homer because it is a common word in both of the Homeric epics and is linked ideologically to μοῖρα insofar as it is a word associated with death. Κήρ may be viewed at times as being personified (like μοῖρα but in contrast to πότμος). In *Il.* 18.535 ff. (ἐν δ᾽ Ἔρις ἐν δὲ Κυδοιμὸς ὁμίλεον, ἐν δ᾽ ὀλοὴ Κήρ, / ἄλλον ζωὸν ἔχουσα νεούτατον, ἄλλον ἄουτον, / ἄλλον τεθνηῶτα κατὰ ἕλκε ποδοῖιν· / εἶμα δ᾽ ἔχ᾽ ἀμφ᾽ ὤμοισι δαφοινεὸν αἵματι φωτῶν)[38], one is vividly portrayed in the description of the shield of Achilles as an active entity, present in battle and dragging away the injured, the unharmed and the dead together. However, this personification occurs only once in the poem, and Dietrich distinguishes between κήρ and a word like μοῖρα (although personifications of μοῖρα are also unusual in Homer), pointing out that the κῆρες never had an active cult, and originally had no connection with the concept of fate.[39] He concludes instead that the κῆρες are an early and vivid concept of defilement and impurity, against which apotropaic acts must be performed. He links the word etymologically to κηραίνω, meaning something similar to φθείρειν and βλάπτειν, and sees it as indicating nothing more complicated than the harm that may strike mortals. It is difficult to feel positively about harm, and the word is therefore purely negative in sense. Dietrich suggests that Homer only uses the word to denote death as the ultimate harm, and it is through this use that κήρ comes to be associated with the concept of μοῖρα.[40]

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[37] Ibid, p. 196.

[38] *Il.* 18. 535 ff.

> And among the multitude was Strife and Confusion, and destructive Death
> holding one man freshly wounded, and another uninjured,
> and she grasped another, dead, by the feet;
> the clothing she had about her shoulders was dark red with the blood of mortals.

[39] He sums up some of the earlier research performed on this word, pointing out that κήρ in Homer has been interpreted as representing the soul (or ghost) of a deceased person, yet it has also been interpreted as representing the activity of a malicious agent which strikes down those in need of a καθαρμός For discussion see Rohde 1925 ch. 1 n. 10; 5 n. 100; 9 n 92 and Harrison 1991 pp. 43 f. Bremmer1983 briefly discusses the problematic association between the κῆρες and souls of the dead as

As with μοῖρα, Dietrich categorizes the uses to which κήρ may be put by Homer. Used in the singular, it is always used to mean 'death', and as such it is used in hendiadys with φόνος and θάνατος. In the plural, the word may still be connected to death, but it also tends at times to be somewhat personified, and as Dietrich puts it "they seem to approach their significance in popular belief of manifestation of ills, except that in Homer the ills always refer to death. Therefore they may be aptly translated by 'forms of death' = the many ways in which a person may die".[41] The third usage involves κῆρες portrayed as actual, fully fledged agents, carrying off their prey to death (this use, he claims, was modeled on similar uses of μοῖρα, although it is relatively rare). Because of the standard connection with death, κήρ/κῆρες are frequently used in the *Iliad* with the epithet μέλαινα or epithets familiar from uses with μοῖρα. In the *Odyssey* κήρ appears with μέλαινα and κακή, and alpha-privatives associated with impurity and pollution, such as ἀκήρατος, 'untouched', and ἀκήριος, 'unharmed'. 'Lifeless', ἀκήριον is derived from κῆρ, and must be distinguished from the words related to κήρ.[42]

Κήρ indicating death may be inflicted in the poem by a human, by a god, by an animal and by an undetermined source. That there is no ambivalence felt about it is clear;

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well, pp. 114-115. For a very brief treatment of κήρ as a word thought to be associated with death in Homer, see Smerdel 1957 p.86. See also Pötscher 1973.

[40] Dietrich 1965 p. 242-243. He takes issue on this point with Greene 1944, who believes it to be derived from κείρω, 'to cut' or 'to shear' (p. 17 n. 40).

[41] Ibid, p. 243. He acknowledges his indebtedness to Nägelsbach on this point, who translates κῆρες as 'Todesarten' (*Homerische Theologie*, p.147 f.). Greene 1944 refers to them as "the spirits that cut short the thread of a man's life," and says that "when least personified (they) are equivalent to the moment of death", (pp. 16-17). Nilsson 1967 meanwhile, calls them "the powers who exercise a pernicious influence on human life", (p. 105.). Willcock 1970 says κήρ is "the special form of death which comes for each person", (p. 55).

it is baneful, as we see in expressions involving hatred likened to death (e.g. *Il.* 9.378). Most often, κήρ is used of death met in battle, which a person seeks to avoid. Most uses in the plural do not indicate personalized entities, but rather 'forms of death', the many ways in which a mortal might die (or be spared from dying).[43] Although Dietrich maintains that in Homer it never means 'fate', the word's association with μοῖρα accounts for the two κῆρες standing ready for Achilles to choose between them and thereby determine the duration of his life and the degree of glory he is to win (*Il.* 9.411).[44] The association between the word κήρ and μοῖρα must be assumed in this line, since one of the choices before Achilles is to die peacefully in old age and violent κήρ is an unusual word for the poet to use to indicate this end (as its typical epithets attest).

R. Garland points out that the word is frequently used with verbs of avoidance or escape, such as ἀλεείνω, ἀλύζω, ἀλεύομαι, φεύγω, ἐκφεύγω etc, and this peculiarity will be treated in upcoming chapters.[45] To Dietrich's three categories of uses of κήρ, Garland adds a fourth: κήρ may be used to denote the physical embodiment of 'an appointed span of life' possessed of weight and shape, concrete and measurable in form (as seen in *Il.* 9.411 and *Il.* 8.70).[46] In this respect, he links κήρ to μοῖρα and αἶσα, viewing it as indicating the lot that comes to the individual (albeit in a more concrete tangible sense). If indeed κήρ is used to refer to the horror of physical death and the conversion of a living body into carrion, then its sense as 'the lot of life appointed to a body' would be in keeping with its physical nature. Of all the aspects of dying, none seems more horrific than this physical transformation that is the antithesis of the 'beautiful death', and hence κήρ when personified is unremittingly monstrous.

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[42] Ibid, pp. 243-244.

[43] Full personification seems to develop in Hesiod's *Theogony*, in which μόρος and κήρ and θάνατος (the concrete entities) are born into the world at the same time, followed by the Μοῖραι and the Κῆρες (the divinities presiding over them). Muellner 1996 discusses this pp. 66-67.

[44] Dietrich 1965 pp. 244-246.

[45] Garland 1981.

P. Vernant has much to say on personified Κήρ as the fearful feminine face of death, in opposition to the beautiful and heroic masculine Θάνατος.[47] Κήρ is the maleficent force of death, that which sweeps down upon mortals and engulfs them when fate ordains that they must perish (for example, ἀλλ' ἐμὲ μὲν κὴρ / ἀμφέχανε στυγερή, ἥ περ λάχε γιγνόμενόν περ *Il.* 23.78-79, 'but hateful doom, / which was allotted to me even as I was being born, has opened up about me'.). If θάνατος ensures fame in song, Κήρ brings to mind only the revulsion and dread that is felt at the transformation of a living being into a corpse, and a corpse into carrion. He says:

> Gorgo and Ker are not the dead as the living remember, commemorate, and celebrate them; rather, they represent the direct confrontation with death itself. They are death proper, that domain beyond-the-threshold, the gaping aperture of the other side that no gaze can penetrate and no discourse can express: they are nothing but the horror of unspeakable Night.[48]

J. M. Redfield also ties in the κῆρες with loathing inspired by decomposition of the body, saying "At the moment of death the organism is converted from subject to object; flesh becomes meat. The *keres* devouring the dying are an image of organic death, by which the animal is converted from eater to eaten".[49] While humans under ordinary circumstances practice burial, the κῆρες are emblematic of the 'antifuneral', and as Redfield suggests, their presence on the battlefield implies that the antifuneral is latent in all battle.[50]

E. Vermeule presents views of Greek death drawn from both poetry and art of varying periods, and says:

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[46] Ibid, p. 45.

[47] Vernant 1991 pp. 95-110. Although Vernant's work is of great interest, there are difficulties inherent in implying conceptual gender from grammatical gender. Granted such terms are represented as male or female in art, and when personified do indeed possess a gender, but Vernant tends to generalize about non-personified death as well.

[49] Redfield 1975 p. 185.

> The *ker* of black *thanatos* can knock a man down and master him; no one can duck or avoid her, she is ten thousand. She is more active and vivid than the usual personifications of battle-field panic and noise, for she is sometimes dressed and her clothes are sprinkled with blood; she has hands and drags corpses by the heels; she has jaws and will later have claws. She is the poetic and private equivalent of the corpse-ravagers of war, the birds and dogs, or the sphinxes, Sirens or Harpies; she has been understood as a ghost, a bacillus, lust, disease, lack of morals; a sister of sleep, death, and the furies, she may be an inherited Mycenaean figure elaborated into variously shaped patterns later. In art she is winged, and may be designed both as attractive and repulsive, as death is both.[51]

She furthermore suggests an Egyptian influence at work, with respect to the themes of the weighing of the κῆρες on scales and of κήρ as the devourer. She argues that the Egyptian motif of weighing the soul of the deceased against the abstract principle of virtue (*Mꜣʿt*) has been replaced in Homer with the weighing of one fighter against another (*Il.* 8.69, *Il.* 16.658, *Il.* 22.209), while the Egyptian motif of the devourer of the dead (in the judgment hall of *Mꜣʿt*) has been replaced by the individual κήρ (*Il.* 23.78-79).[52] Κήρ has become the personal demon who walks beside each of us, waiting for her moment to strike.

This weighing of κῆρες may in fact be attributable to another factor, however. D. J. N. Lee commenting on Rohde's interpretation of the word κῆρες as '*daimones* of Hades' suggests, with respect to Rohde's claim that in the plural, the word is an early substitute for ψυχαί, that κήρ and κῆρ have been confused. As Lee points out, Rohde does not ever touch upon the meaning of the word in its singular form.[53] To my mind this casts an interesting light on the weighing of the κῆρες on the scales of Zeus. In

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[50] Ibid, p. 184-185.

[51] Vermeule 1979 pp. 39-40.

[52] Ibid, p.76.

[53] Ibid, p.194, commenting on Rohde 1925 pp. 44 (note 10), 199 (notes 99 and 100), and 323 (note 92).

Egyptian religion, it is the *heart* of the deceased (the *ꜣb*)[54] which is weighed in order to test its justness. An element of Egyptian belief may indeed have worked its way into Homer, but quite possibly it would have originally been the κῆρ (the equivalent Homeric 'heart' word) that was weighed on the scales, not the monstrous κήρ (which Vermeule must awkwardly attempt to align with the Egyptian monster who devours the hearts of the guilty). Given the similarity between κήρ and κῆρ, it is conceivable that the 'heart' word was at some point substituted by the word indicating the 'doom of the hero'. This is in fact more likely than Vermeule's claim that the one who condemns the judged has somehow become the thing being judged.

The two remaining death terms, τέλος and θάνατος are devoid of any notion of fate, and as such stand apart in a category of their own. Θάνατος is the most obvious example in Homer of a word meaning 'death'. While other words like μοῖρα, κήρ, πότμος, αἶσα and τέλος all possess a range of possible interpretations and nuances dependent upon context, θάνατος is always death and nothing but death. General discussions concerning death are therefore treated here as though dealing with θάνατος. It has often been claimed that as far as death words go in Homer, θάνατος is one of the more positive, or at least morally neutral, of them all. *LSJ* s.v. refer to it merely as "death, whether natural or violent", while Cunliffe s.v says merely "Death…a kind or mode of death…". Although entries in the lexica for this word may be brief, there has nonetheless been considerable study done on this word.

P. Hollifield discusses the etymology of the word,[55] deducing that it derives from an Indo-European root originally meaning 'flows away', 'dissipates', later 'perishes', and eventually 'dies'. He suggests that the evolution of meaning might have occurred long before the earliest attestation in Greek.[56] T. Smerdel briefly discusses the word along with its epithets,[57] and P. Ambrose similarly deals with θάνατος as it is used in conjunction with τέλος (i.e. in the genitive, meaning 'the end consisting of death').[58]

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[54] For more on Egyptian psychological and spiritual organs, see Na'im Akbar 1986.

[55] Hollifield 1978. For more on this word, see also Chantraine's *Dictionnaire étymologique*, θάνατος s.v.

P. Vernant speaks about θάνατος in terms of gender in his "Feminine Figures of Death in Greece", already discussed. For him, the masculine face of death in Greek thought is that which is beautiful, while the fearful, the 'other', is that which is feminine. He says of θάνατος:

> To speak of death, Greek uses a masculine noun: Thanatos. In figural representations Thanatos appears, together with his brother Hupnos, Sleep, as a man in the prime of life, wearing a helmet and armor. Lifting up the corpse of a hero fallen on the field of battle and bearing it off to a distant place so that it may receive funeral honors, the two divine brothers can be distinguished from ordinary warriors only by the wings they wear on their shoulders. There is nothing terrifying and even less that is monstrous about this figure of Thanatos, whose role is not to kill but to receive the dead, to transport the one who has lost his (or her) life. In visual art and epic representations, this virile Thanatos can even assume the form of the warrior who has been able to find the perfect fulfillment of his life in what the Greeks call "a beautiful death." As a result of his exploits - in and through his heroic death - the warrior fallen on the front line of battle remains forever present in men's lives and memories. Epic continually celebrates his name and sings of his imperishable glory; sixth-century steles present him on his tomb for public viewing, forever standing erect in the flower of his youth, in the brilliance of his virile beauty.
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> The masculine figure of Thanatos therefore does not seem to incarnate the terrible destructive force that descends on human beings to destroy them, but rather that state other than life, that new condition to which funeral rites offer men access and from which none can escape, since born of a mortal race, all must one day take leave of the light of the sun to be delivered over to the world of darkness and Night.[59]

Vernant goes on to point out that this does not mean that θάνατος is 'peaceful and ever gentle to mortals' in the way that his brother Sleep is. In Hesiod, for example, we hear that θάνατος has a 'heart of iron, an implacable soul of bronze' because 'he holds forever the man he has taken' (*Theog*. 764-766). Θάνατος is inescapable, inexorable, but he is still depicted in a fundamentally different way than κήρ is. If κήρ is the horror of death, θάνατος, says Vernant, is the beauty of a heroic death and a glorious immortality in song.[60]

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[56] Ibid, p. 182.

[57] Smerdel 1957 p. 87.

[58] Ambrose 1963 p. 58 ff.

Vermeule paints θάνατος as morally neutral, devoid of true horror but also devoid of beauty. It does not kill, but accepts the dead. Although Θάνατος appears with negative epithets like δυσηχής ('ill-sounding') and τανηλεγής ('stretching one at length'), this is only because mortals fear his coming, not because he conducts himself badly or with overt hostility. When the τέλος θανάτοιο comes gently, he might even be comforting.[61] As she says:

> In some sense there is no agent of death for the Greeks, because death is not a power—so Hades and Thanatos are notoriously unworshipped; death is a negative, a cessation, an inversion of life, but not a physical enemy. Thanatos is no more a killer than Hades; he represents an aspect of what happens when life stops, and is consequently the source of anxiety in the company of other lightly personified figures of epic poetry like *moira*, *fate*, *potmos*, destiny, and the *keres*. Thanatos is not a fully developed figure in Homeric epic. He appears incarnate and upper case only once in Homer, in the big set piece of *Iliad* XVI on the death of the Lycian Sarpedon.[62]

She goes on to discuss the semi-personification of θάνατος, and also points out that very often the word is used in the genitive to qualify other agents such as μοῖρα and τέλος. It is also used with colour terms for darkness, since in Greek thought, to die is to

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[59] Vernant 1991 p. 95.

[60] Ibid, p. 96. For descriptions of similar representations of θάνατος in art, see the *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae*, I of vol. 7, pp. 904-906.

[61] Vermeule 1979 p. 145.

[62] Ibid, p. 37. She is one of the few scholars to claim that πότμος is ever personified in any way. The fact that θάνατος was never worshipped as a god with a cult, but was instead viewed as a natural process, is also discussed by Dietrich 1965, p.88.

leave the light,[63] and also because black is the colour of the earth, dried blood, cloud, inscrutable night and the unfathomable depths of the sea.[64]

Nilsson, however, argues that the unknowable *must* necessarily be negative, as mortals naturally fear what they cannot know and what therefore has no meaning for them. He says:

> Death projects his deep black shadow upon the fair life of men; the Homeric man is seized with terror when confronted with the empty nothingness of the kingdom of the dead. Therefore the idea of death as the certain lot of all the living, predetermined and assigned simultaneously with birth, grips him with violence.[65]

Interestingly, although θάνατος is often viewed as being one of the less negative of the death terms, it nevertheless possesses an ambiguous connection with trickery. This connection is ambiguous because trickery is a bane for those who are deceived, and yet cunning is much admired by the ancient Greeks in general. On this aspect:

> As inscribed in the chaos of Night—chaos that has no representations since it has no orientation by any cardinal points—death is indefinable, measureless, defying all images. But in many instances, the vocabulary that describes death belongs to the semantic field of trickery. Its connections with sleep help to reinforce this aspect, an aspect that can at any moment become an instrument of subterfuge. Whether it be a deceiving sleep such as that with which Hypnos, bribed by Hera, envelops Zeus (*Dios apate*: Homer *Il.* 14. 233 ff.), or the brutal and unrefreshing sleep with which Hermes strikes the guards of the Achaeans' camp in order to let Priam pass (Homer *Il.* 24.445), in all cases Hypnos, who is specifically referred to as the brother of Thanatos and who always carries around with him a certain taste of death, envelops his victims and deprives them simultaneously of vigilance and sight.[66]

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[63] The image of death as related to darkness contrasted with light and life is discussed by Moreux 1967. Redfield 1975 also mentions this point p.254, where he points out that to be alive is to be 'casting glances across the earth' (1.88), while death is a darkness which covers the eyes. Griffin 1980 also deals with this aspect of Greek thought pp. 90-91.

[64] Vermeule 1979 p. 39.

[65] Nilsson 1967 p. 169.

[66] *Mythologies*, ed. Y. Bonnefoy. p. 406, by L. K.-L. and N. L./g.h

Finally, we turn to one of the more marginal words associated with 'death' in Homer. Τέλος is in itself, strictly speaking not typically a death term at all, and yet it is frequently used in conjunction with death (θάνατος in the genitive) in Homeric poetry, indicating something like the end, fulfillment or completion that consists of death.[67] As a result, τέλος comes to be regarded almost as a word for death in its own right, although numerous other interpretations may be sought. While older studies on these interpretations abound, recent scholarship on Homeric death terminology devoted specifically to this word is rare. Where it is mentioned, it is typically only in passing (for example, T. Smerdel very briefly touches on the subject of τέλος and its uses with words for death).[68]

One of the best and most thorough recent sources in connection with this word is an unpublished dissertation by Z. P. Ambrose. Ambrose begins his study with a survey of the scholarship on the etymology of τέλος, and he points out at the outset that early interpretations of the word based on the assumption that it was derived directly from the verb τέλλω are no longer viewed as valid, although questions regarding its possible roots and relative meanings are still not entirely resolved.[69]

Ambrose traces the development of various meanings for τέλος and its related words, particularly insofar as they are understood in the Homeric context. He also treats interpretations of the use of the genitive case with the word (that is, the varying views that the genitives are appositional or material, or merely partitive).[70] He discusses the argument that the word should not be taken to mean the 'end', but rather 'the completion of what has been previously promised, said, hoped or done',[71] as well as Nitzsch's claim that the word has a double sense, the first being 'something desired', the second being 'something given'. For an instance of the first sense, we are given the example τέλος γάμοιο, while in the second case, a τέλος is likened to a θυσία.[72] Ambrose also deals with a very interesting argument put forward by J. E. Harrison[73] that related words, when used of sacrificial victims, mean 'grown up', or having reached a level of 'perfection', and that this fact could be used to argue the relationship between death and marriage in early Greek thought, since generally speaking the development of physical and moral maturity, and hence, perfection, is the harbinger of marriage, and in such exceptional cases, clearly of death as well. For females at least, death may symbolically act as a substitute for marriage.

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[67] For a discussion on this, see the entry for τέλος by Chantraine, *Dictionnaire étymologique*, in which he defines τέλος as "achèvement, terme, réalisation, (*Il.* 16.630: ἐν γὰρ χερσὶ τέλος πολέμου) " as well as "décision, pouvoir de décision, autorité, charge" and "rite (*Od.* 20.74)" p. 1101. *LSJ* s.v. also provides a comprehensive account of the ranges of meaning belonging to this word, among them listing "a coming to pass... a consummation". Similarly Cunliffe s.v. says of it, among other things, that it is "The accomplishment, carrying out, fulfillment of something..."

[68] Smerdel 1957 p. 87-88.

[69] Ambrose 1963 p. 4-5.

[70] Ibid, p. 8.

Ambrose very helpfully treats the subject of specific uses of τέλος in Homer, as it appears with the words θανάτοιο, πολέμοιο, νόστοιο and μισθοῖο (the genitives used with nineteen of the thirty two instances of τέλος in the Homeric poem—in two of these nineteen cases, the genitive is left implied and unstated).[74] He suggests that the uses of these genitives vary for each word (for example, in the case of θανάτοιο he argues the genitive must be appositional, while in the case of πολέμοιο it is partitive, for μισθοῖο it is material, and for νόστοιο it appears as either partitive or material).[75] For our purposes here, clearly τέλος θανάτοιο is the most relevant.

Having argued that τέλος θανάτοιο therefore means 'a τέλος consisting of death', Ambrose explores the prominence of these two words together in the Homeric poems. In fact, this phrase accounts for thirteen of the nineteen uses of τέλος as it appears with the above mentioned terms. It should be noted that in one of these cases θάνατος is merely implied, leaving τέλος to indicate death all by itself.[76]

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[71] Ibid, p. 10.
[72] Ibid, p. 11.
[73] Harrison 1914.
[74] For detail, see Ambrose 1963 p. 58.
[75] Ibid, p. 59.

In conclusion, it is indeed possible to make distinctions between Homer's various death words, and to attribute to each a unique sense. Μοῖρα (as a death term) is the fate of death, but it is that which is allotted or apportioned justly or unjustly. Although typically an abstract and unknowable power, it suggests some degree of active agency (the allotting or apportioning are acts of a will). Αἶσα is the fate of death which is fair, right, and in proportion. The equity of one's portion may not be a matter of chance (it is easy to imagine that a fair measure may be a deliberately measured quantity). Πότμος is the fate of death that befalls one owing to various circumstances. It is the most passive of the death words, is morally neutral and indicates no presence of an active agency. Κήρ is the very active fate of death which is malevolent, monstrous, and antithetical to the concept of the 'beautiful death'; it is physical in nature, and reminds the audience of the horrific changes which occur in the body after death. Θάνατος is perhaps an active agent, but is not viewed as being the cause of loss of life. Rather, it is the resulting effect, the force which stands ready to receive the dead unto itself. Τέλος, finally, as the end that consists of death, is a fulfillment, a bringing to perfection, that which is sought and bestowed. It is rarely negative in sense, but is often used to indicate the most ideal of deaths, that which fixes the hero forever at his most perfect. It is his fulfillment and his reward. I would suggest that it is exactly because of this that it is also one of the least often used of the death terms in Homer.

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[76] *Il.* 11.439.

Chapter 3

Presence and Absence: the Use and Avoidance of Death Terms

> On pain of death, let no man name death to me,
> it is a word infinitely terrible.
>
> John Webster, *The White Devil*, V.III. 39-40

Having explored the nuances of the terms for death, we will now consider their presence and absence in death-related passages. Sample passages will be presented here, serving as control texts, but for a complete statistical breakdown of all death-related passages and how they relate to my argument, I refer the reader to the appendix at the end of this work.

Death in the abstract and death in reality appear, on the whole, to be treated as two very different matters in the poem and they are spoken about in systematically different ways. In essence, we have death as a fearsome entity or force that may be imagined, named, or discussed, and death as a basic, biological fact, devoid of identity, intent or purpose, and ultimately inscrutable. For all of the hero's intellectual musings about the nature of death in the abstract, such speculation is put aside when life actually departs, and the description we find of life's end usually centers on the physical effects of death upon the body. A character may imagine death any way he likes, but when life terminates, it is something different than what was envisioned. In a very real sense, one does not experience death at all, since in dying all capacity for physical sensation and awareness is ended. Dying is, in fact, the opposite of experience, and as such must be devoid of all imagined conceits.[1]

Once might object that if the poem is depicting a life-threatening scene in which gross physical damage to the body is sustained, then the immediacy of death is too obvious to require a nominal designation. While such a scene may not *require* nominal designation, however, it certainly would not preclude it as a possibility, and we would therefore expect to find a random distribution of scenes in which death would sometimes be named and sometimes remain nameless. This does not happen. In the vast majority of cases, when death is occurring, it is not named, and the exceptions to this pattern are rare enough to emphasise it more than anything else (these exceptions to the general pattern do deserve treatment, and they are discussed in this chapter, pp. 112-123).

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[1] Again, for detail on biological death descriptions, see Garland 1981.

Similarly, one may object that when the narrator is considering death as a future possibility, he is likely to employ a nominal designation to clarify the potential outcome. I think this too, is flawed, for the same reason that the objection noted above is flawed. There are certainly enough euphemisms for death in Homeric poetry to allow the narrator to imply what is coming without naming it directly (he could say, for example, "the darkness was about to pour over the eyes ", and certainly the audience would know what was intended). The fact that death as a future possibility is so often named suggests more than random chance. It is a clearly established pattern of usage, and in my opinion it is deliberate.

I should clarify how I will decide whether to classify a passage as narrating the actual end of life, or as merely leading up to it. The general premise I am working on is this: if the text says that the fatal blow to the hero has been struck, death is assumed to be present. Prior to the fatal blow, death is assumed to remain at an unknown distance. At times, the narrator names death which is about to occur, and yet most often the naming of death will precede its accomplishment by a number of lines (five is a typical minimum, and when it is accomplished, it is depicted in graphically biological terms). It is very unusual for death to be named in the same line as its occurrence. A fine example of this separation of the name for death and its realization may be found in book 13, (lines 601-618, for text and translation see page 80).

I have stated in the first chapter of this thesis that I am adopting a narratological approach. This will be evident in this chapter, but it will become increasingly significant in the following chapters, since they deal specifically with the distinction between narrator and character spoken text. In this chapter I seek only to establish the poem's tendency to name only the non-immediate death and its practice of describing the immediate. Since I will often be using terms like 'typical' and 'tendency', I must clarify how many times a certain element must appear before I consider it a trend in the poetic structure. B. Fenik, in discussing Homeric battle scenes and definable narrative blocks says "When I call something 'typical' I mean that it is repeated at least twice in the *Iliad*."[2] In the case of my own research, I can confirm that the pattern for which I argue is demonstrated with a far greater frequency than that. Breaking down the appearances of the various death terms statistically, one finds that in fact μοῖρα relating directly or indirectly to the idea of the allotted fate of death appears in total twenty-four times. Of these twenty-four appearances, nineteen of them are to be found in passages in which death is not actually occurring. Αἶσα as related to the idea of the 'equitable portion of death' appears in the poem seven times, and in no such instance is it mentioned when death is at the point of realization. Πότμος as the 'fate of death which befalls one' appears twelve times, and marks the actual moment of death only three times. Defiling κήρ as violent death is used in total forty-six times, but appears in passages wherein the moment of death occurs in only four instances. Θάνατος appears seventy-seven times, but is only mentioned at the point of death thirteen times. Τέλος appears as 'the fulfillment that consists of death' nine times, but only once at the moment of death.

These statistics bring up an important issue, and it involves our own ideas concerning the nature of death. One of the greatest impediments to a modern study of Homeric death is the fact that we approach the poem as though we know what Homeric death is. It is all too easy to regard death as an event situated in one specific point in time, yet death for Homer would seem to be something quite different. In the poem, it may be argued, each death is a process as opposed to a localized event. The poem deals not only with the precise moment at which the ψυχή leaves the body, but also with all that leads up to this moment and all that results from it. For example, although Achilles does not meet with the fatal blow in the text, his death is nevertheless very much present, suspended ominously over the entire narrative right from the first book. Similarly, Hektor's death dominates *Il.* 24, even though his ψυχή has left his body in *Il.* 22 (361-366). The poem explores the process of dying and its repercussions through every level of time. Foreshadowing of the possibility of death and the post-death meditative process of grieving are as important, if not more, than the actual moment in which life is extinguished. I frequently refer to 'the point when life actually terminates', to address the actual moment of biological death, and this is the moment in which the poem most often leaves death nameless.

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[2] Fenik 1968 p.5

The terms for death in the *Iliad* appear *most often* when death is being discussed as a possibility, or when it is avoided altogether. As stated in the introductory chapter, these are tendencies only; not rules, and they are of interest because they are a relevant symptom of the poem's presentation of the various faces of death (that which is a crude, physical reality and that which is idealized and distant).

But why should the situation manifest itself in this particular way? It is possible that the reason is relatively simple; death terms rarely appear in narrative contexts of killing because narratives of battle are graphic and action-oriented, while death terms are to be expected more often in reflective contexts. One could argue that this need not imply that death is being conceptualized in a different way. However, this is a problematic stance for a variety of reasons. That words such as μοῖρα, αἶσα, πότμος and κήρ may be translated in a variety of ways is not a point of dispute; they are complex terms with varying nuances, and a number of these nuances are indeed abstract. Certainly, such terms are not out of place in reflective contexts. However, denoting death as they so often do (regardless of the type of death each brings to the mind of the audience), they need not necessarily always be viewed as being abstract terms. It is difficult to see why the various terms for 'death' should be so abstract as to be impractical for the poet to use in an action-oriented scene. To the Homeric audience, well versed in Homeric language and terminology, the appearance of a death term (regardless of its nuances) in an action-oriented sequence would hardly be disturbing.

The real obstacle to the naming of death in such instances is likely a matter of formulaic structure. Passages that relate the deaths of multiple warriors in quick succession have a tendency to follow a set pattern wherein both the killer and killed must be named (linked by the verb of killing). It is for this reason that the text says Ἄξυλον δ' ἄρ' ἔπεφνε βοὴν ἀγαθὸς Διομήδης (*Il.* 6.12), 'Diomedes skilled at the war cry slaughtered Axylos', rather than something to the effect 'moira seized Axylos'.[3] Although this type of formula typically leaves out a noun for death, this does not in any way undermine the claim that this absence of a death-term in such contexts reflects a choice on the part of the poet. There are points within the poem where formulaic structure is followed, and there are points where it is not. I would argue that such passages are rendered using this established formula specifically *because* the formula does not name death. As B. Fenik has observed, "It is interesting that even at the higher levels of poetic composition, and not just in the recitation of battle scenes, the poet operates, or at least on occasion can operate, with type situations."[4] In attempting to discern how this formula came to leave death nameless in the first place, it may be useful to look to other fields of study.

Perhaps the absence of death terms in such formulaic passages may have something to do with cultural taboos regarding the naming of unpleasant or potentially dangerous things. It is not unusual to find what is frightening left either unmentioned or, at the very least, given a kindlier name, in the hopes that its nature will conform. For example, the Greeks refer to night as 'the kindly time', in the hope that all that is potentially dangerous about darkness will be averted. Similarly, the Romans call their underworld god Pluto, 'the enricher', focusing on his chthonic and vegetative aspects rather than on his function as lord of the dead. The idea that naming something gives it power has even carried down into the modern day. Still in use is the English expression "name the devil and he will appear". M. K. Adler, whose work concentrates on sociolinguistics, has done a great deal of research on naming taboos in various cultures. As he points out, taboos against mentioning certain sources of anxiety may not only result in these sources going nameless (as so often happens with death within the *Iliad*), but may also lead to the development of various substitute words for the source of anxiety (and of course, we do find a variety of death terms in Homer). As he says in his book *Naming and Addressing: a Sociolinguistic Study* (1978), pp. 35-36,

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[3] One sees the same sort of thing in *Il.* 6 1-94, which Fenik 1968 discusses on pp. 7-20).
[4] Fenik 1968 p. 211.

> ...it 'starts out as a merely negative factor in the development of language; but since it necessitates numerous substitute words, it becomes a stimulating force and produces a creative attitude toward language. The final result of the word coining provoked by it is, among the Zulu, and, without doubt, among many other peoples, a large stock of synonyms; and since, in the case of tribal word-taboos, the range of prohibitions is geographically restricted, there arise local differences within the national vocabulary...' (Estrich and Spencer, 1952, p. 9ff.), This shows clearly the immense impact of word taboos on language; new words are coined, old words dissappear or are restricted to what the particular society may consider as malefactors; dialects arise, and synonyms are created.

Given that death terms *are* most often used when death is not an immediate threat, the nuance of any given death word as it appears in non-immediate contexts has little bearing on the nature of the death finally granted to the hero beyond creating effects of irony or prophecy by the use of foreshadowing. Unless we are expected to carry over assumptions about these nuances found in non-immediate contexts, and assume an unstated word for death in scenes where they do not actually appear, we must imagine that the presence or absence of a death word in a death-related passage is significant.

In light of this, one must take a critical view of Vernant's claim that the masculine θάνατος is the good death, while the feminine terms for death are used to refer to the bad death, since these words seldom make an appearance at the point of life's termination. Moreoever, the masculine term for death frequently appears alongside a feminine term for death, as though they are working together.

These two levels of death then, the intellectualized, and the unimaginable process which is purely biological, are each present in the poem, and are usually indicated clearly in any given passage relating to the end of life by the presence or absence of a word for death. Intellectualized and biological death are purposefully juxtaposed with one another. The effect is that the biological reality of dying undercuts the envisioned, culturally created ideal of heroic death.

To begin I shall briefly survey passages in which death words are present, and look for ways of grouping them according to the most common types of contexts in which they appear. In cases wherein a word for death may also have additional meanings (for example, μοῖρα, which may mean 'death' in some contexts, can also be used to mean a 'share' of something entirely tangible, such as booty or food), only passages relating more or less directly to death will be treated. Although consideration of compound words in which death words are a component would no doubt prove fruitful for future study, I shall focus only on the actual death words themselves at present.

As in the preceding section, we begin with μοῖρα, the most written about of the death terms. Cases in which the word is used to mean 'fate' in an abstract or general sense will be excluded from discussion, while cases in which the word appears to be used to mean 'fate', 'destiny' or 'doom' as a death term (problems of synonymy notwithstanding), will be given priority. For this reason, passages relating to what some have viewed as a personified Μοῖρα as a universal principle of Destiny working in connection with Zeus (e.g. *Il.*18.87, 410, *Il.*24.49, 209) will not be treated, and neither will uses such as ὑπὲρ μοῖραν (beyond fate/measure), as the issues surrounding such cases do not fall within the scope of the present study.

Based on the observations drawn in chapter two, I will translate the following death words as follows: μοῖρα will be treated as meaning 'fate (specifically the fate of death)', αἶσα will be rendered as 'fitting fate' or 'due fate', πότμος will be translated simply as 'destiny', and κήρ will be translated as 'destructive fate' or 'violent death'. Θάνατος will be treated simply as 'death', and τέλος will be treated as 'the end (that consists of death)'.

In *Il.* 3.101-102, we find ἡμέων δ᾽ ὁπποτέρῳ θάνατος καὶ μοῖρα τέτυκται, / τεθναίη. 'But for whichever of the two of us death and fate are fashioned, / let him die'. This line is found in a scene in which Menelaos has been invited to individual combat with Paris. Having decided to let the conflict be resolved between the two of them alone, Menelaos exhorts his men to stand down and put a temporary end to hostilities. This is an excellent example of the sort of use to which words for death, and μοῖρα in particular, are put. In this passage, both μοῖρα and θάνατος are being discussed as possibilities (combined in hendiadys they amount to the concept of 'destined death', although neither of the combatants knows upon which of them destined death is set). Death is in this sense remote, and the specific threat to the doomed individual is not yet at the point of realization. The use of the optative mood further underlines the unknowability of the outcome of events. It is dying as a future possibility that is discussed and contemplated by the characters. This passage deals with approaching death, but does not describe the event of dying, and as we shall see, this is typical of the poem (particularily when the text's heroic focalizers are speaking).

In support of this claim, one can produce a list of passages, including the interesting and very well known reference to μοῖρα in book 6, wherein Hektor speaks to Andromache about the inescapability of death for all living creatures. He says:

> δαιμονίη, μή μοί τι λίην ἀκαχίζεο θυμῷ·
> οὐ γάρ τίς μ' ὑπὲρ αἶσαν ἀνὴρ Ἄϊδι προϊάψει·
> μοῖραν δ' οὔ τινά φημι πεφυγμένον ἔμμεναι ἀνδρῶν,
> οὐ κακόν, οὐδὲ μὲν ἐσθλόν, ἐπὴν τὰ πρῶτα γένηται. (*Il.* 6.486-489)
>
> Strange one, don't in any way grieve excessively for me in your spirit;
> For no man will cast me to Hades beyond due fate;
> But I say there is no one among men who has fled fate,
> Not a cowardly man nor a good one, once it has taken first form (lit: once it has become the first things).

The accusative beginning the third line in this selection probably features μοῖρα as a death term, since the preceding line discusses the likelihood of being sent to Hades' realm (a common metaphorical reference to dying), and the line beginning with μοῖραν makes direct reference to what has come before. In this case μοῖρα is used as a term for the inevitable, allotted death that awaits each mortal in the proper time. The destiny which is named is the death of intellectual musing, not the actual biological occurrence (i.e. the culmination of the dying process).

Similarly, in book 7 Helenos says to Hektor οὐ γάρ πώ μοῖρα θανεῖν καὶ πότμον ἐπισπεῖν (*Il.* 7.52), 'For it is not yet your fate to die and seek out doom'. In this context, μοῖρα may be understood as a direct reference to the appointed fate of death, owing to the use of the aorist infinitive of the verb 'to die' used in conjunction with it, which underlines its intended meaning in this case. Once again, the named death is being spoken about as something which is in no way an immediate reality. I. J. F. DeJong classifies this passage as one in which the external primary narrator-focalizer embeds a character-text within his own narrator-text. This causes the speaking character in turn to become a secondary narrattee-focalizee.[5]

Named death as a possibility also appears in a speech of Achilles to Odysseus: ἴση μοῖρα μένοντι, καὶ εἰ μάλα τις πολεμίζοι· / ἐν δὲ ἰῇ τιμῇ ἠμὲν κακὸς ἠδὲ καὶ ἐσθλός· / κάτθαν᾽ ὁμῶς ὅ τ᾽ ἀεργὸς ἀνὴρ ὅ τε πολλὰ ἐοργώς (*Il.* 9. 318-320), 'Fate is the same for the one who lingers, and if one wages war heartily, / in the same honour, both the base man and the noble, / both the idle man and the one who does much, die alike'. Μοῖρα in this case is clearly a name for death, since the possibility of dying in war is what is being discussed. Death is a topic for contemplation; it is not at this point in the poem being realized.[6] Also worth noting is the fact that μοῖρα serves a double function, refering not only to 'death' but also to 'booty' and that Achilles makes two different points with one word.[7]

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[5] DeJong 1989 p.81. As DeJong says, the use of such *if not* situations (i.e. the presentation of something that would run contrary to fate) allows for the primary narrator-focalizer directly, or indirectly via speaking characters, to confirm his status as a reliable presentor of facts as they happened.

[6] Similar uses of these death words appear in *Il.*16.852-853, in which we find οὔ θην οὐδ᾽ αὐτὸς δηρὸν βέῃ, ἀλλά τοι ἤδη / ἄγχι παρέστηκεν θάνατος καὶ μοῖρα κραταιή..., 'surely you yourself are not one who will go on too long, but already / death and powerful fate stand close', and in *Il.*17.421-422, where we find ὦ φίλοι, εἰ καὶ μοῖρα παρ᾽ ἀνέρι τῷδε δαμῆναι / πάντας ὁμῶς, μή πώ τις ἐρωείτω πολέμοιο, 'Oh friends, even if it is fate for all of us to be subdued over this man, / nevertheless let no one retreat from battle'. Consider also the following passage in which μοῖρα appears in hendiadys with θάνατος:

> οὐχ ὁράᾳς οἷος καὶ ἐγὼ καλός τε μέγας τε;
> πατρὸς δ᾽ εἴμ᾽ ἀγαθοῖο, θεὰ δέ με γείνατο μήτηρ·
> ἀλλ᾽ ἔπι τοι καὶ ἐμοὶ θάνατος καὶ μοῖρα κραταιή·
> ἔσσεται ἢ ἠὼς ἢ δείλη ἢ μέσον ἦμαρ,
> ὁππότε τις καὶ ἐμεῖο Ἄρῃ ἐκ θυμὸν ἕληται,
> ἢ ὅ γε δουρὶ βαλὼν ἢ ἀπὸ νευρῆφιν ὀϊστῷ (*Il.* 21.108-113)
>
> Do you not see what sort of man I am, both brave and large?
> I am from a noble father, and the mother who bore me a goddess,
> but still, even for me there is a death and mighty fate.
> There will be a dawn or an afternoon or a mid-day
> when someone will seize the spirit from me on account of Ares,
> either casting with a spear or with an arrow from a bow-string.

Another passage which discusses and names death belonging to a future time is καὶ δὲ σοὶ αὐτῷ μοῖρα, θεοῖς ἐπιείκελ᾽ Ἀχιλλεῦ, / τείχει ὕπο Τρώων εὐηφενέων ἀπολέσθαι. (*Il.* 23.80-81, 'and there is a fate for you yourself, Achilles like unto the gods, / to perish under the walls of the flourishing Trojans'), as does the mournful speech of Thetis to her son Achilles, in which she says οὐ γάρ μοι δηρὸν βέῃ, ἀλλά τοι ἤδη / ἄγχι παρέστηκεν θάνατος καὶ μοῖρα κραταιή. (*Il.* 24.131-132), 'For you will not go on too long for me, but already / death and mighty doom stand close'. This passage echoes Patroklos' words to Hektor, mentioned above, in book 16. We may also consider the rather remarkable passage in which Hektor chooses to stand and face his death, and in which we hear νῦν αὖτέ με μοῖρα κιχάνει. / μὴ μὰν ἀσπουδί γε καὶ ἀκλειῶς ἀπολοίμην, / ἀλλὰ μέγα ῥέξας τι καὶ ἐσσομένοισι πυθέσθαι. (*Il.* 22.303-305), 'But now fate has come upon me. / Let me not, however, die ingloriously without a struggle, /

In book 4, we find something rather different, although equally interesting.

> Ἔνθ' Ἀμαρυγκείδην Διώρεα μοῖρα πέδησε·
> χερμαδίῳ γὰρ βλῆτο παρὰ σφυρὸν ὀκριόεντι
> κνήμην δεξιτερήν· βάλε δὲ Θρῃκῶν ἀγὸς ἀνδρῶν,
> Πείρως Ἰμβρασίδης, ὃς ἄρ' Αἰνόθεν εἰληλούθει.
> ἀμφοτέρω δὲ τένοντε καὶ ὀστέα λᾶας ἀναιδὴς
> ἄχρις ἀπηλοίησεν· ὁ δ' ὕπτιος ἐν κονίῃσι
> κάππεσεν, ἄμφω χεῖρε φίλοις ἑτάροισι πετάσσας,
> θυμὸν ἀποπνείων· ὁ δ' ἐπέδραμεν ὅς ῥ' ἔβαλέν περ,
> Πείρως, οὖτα δὲ δουρὶ παρ' ὀμφαλόν· ἐκ δ' ἄρα πᾶσαι
> χύντο χαμαὶ χολάδες, τὸν δὲ σκότος ὄσσε κάλυψε. (*Il.* 4.517-526)
>
> Then fate bound fast Diores, son of Amaryngkeus,
> for he was struck on the ankle with a jagged rock for throwing
> on the right leg, and the leader of the Thracian men threw it,
> Peiros, son of Imbrasos, who had come from Ainos.
> The ruthless stone utterly destroyed both of the two tendons
> and the bones, and he fell on his back into the dust,
> reaching out both hands to his dear companions,
> gasping out his spirit. And he who had easily thrown it (the stone) ran up, Peiros,
> and cast the spear into his navel, and then all
> his intestines were poured out onto the ground, and darkness covered his eyes.

Μοῖρα as 'doom' or 'fate' appears here as an active agent in events leading up to death. Again we are reminded of the extent to which death is treated as a process. The passage describes events leading *up to* the death, and culminates with the actual exit of life from the body in line 526. It is significant that in line 526, wherein we understand death to occur, it is not named, but is described. In this context, μοῖρα is not immediately lethal, nor is it the direct cause of the cessation of life; indeed, it does no more than grasp the warrior Dores while he is injured, felled, and subsequently killed with a stab to the navel by Peiros. The active agent in the killing is Peiros, although μοῖρα is ascribed the active

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but in some way accomplishing great things, and men to come to know of it'. Although he speaks as if death were immediately upon him and his life were at that point passing out of existence, this is not the case. Death is a very real threat, and it is imminent, but still not immediately present. Although not long off, named death is still a thing belonging to the future.

[7] See Hainsworth's 1993 commentary, p. 104.

role of holding the doomed man in place for the blow which will end his life. Nameless death is then conveyed with the grim words σκότος ὄσσε κάλυψσε, (darkness covered his eyes) after a horrifyingly graphic, purely biological depiction of the effects of the sword on flesh.[8]

In some passages we find an interesting mix of named and nameless death. For example, in book 13:

> Πείσανδρος δ' ἰθὺς Μενελάου κυδαλίμοιο
> ἤϊε· τὸν δ' ἄγε μοῖρα κακὴ θανάτοιο τέλοσδε,
> σοί, Μενέλαε, δαμῆναι ἐν αἰνῇ δηϊοτῆτι.
> οἱ δ' ὅτε δὴ σχεδὸν ἦσαν ἐπ' ἀλλήλοισιν ἰόντες,
> 'Ατρεΐδης μὲν ἅμαρτε, παραὶ δέ οἱ ἐτράπετ' ἔγχος,
> Πείσανδρος δὲ σάκος Μενελάου κυδαλίμοιο
> οὔτασεν, οὐδὲ διαπρὸ δυνήσατο χαλκὸν ἐλάσσαι·
> ἔσχεθε γὰρ σάκος εὐρύ, κατεκλάσθη δ' ἐνὶ καυλῷ
> ἔγχος· ὁ δὲ ἐρυσσάμενος ξίφος ἀργυροήλον
> ἆλτ' ἐπὶ Πεισάνδρῳ· ὁ δ' ὑπ' ἀσπίδος εἵλετο καλὴν
> ἀξίνην εὔχαλκον, ἐλαΐνῳ ἀμφὶ πελέκκῳ,
> μακρῷ ἐϋξέστῳ· ἅμα δ' ἀλλήλων ἐφίκοντο.
> ἤτοι ὁ μὲν κόρυθος φάλον ἤλασεν ἱπποδασείης
> ἄκρον ὑπὸ λόφον αὐτόν, ὁ δὲ προσιόντα μέτωπον
> ῥινὸς ὕπερ πυμάτης· λάκε δ' ὀστέα, τὼ δὲ οἱ ὄσσε
> πὰρ ποσὶν αἱματόεντα χαμαὶ πέσον ἐν κονίῃσιν,
> ἰδνώθη δὲ πεσών· (*Il.* 13.601-618)

> Peisandros advanced straight on glorious Menelaos,
> but an evil fate led him towards death's end,
> to be subdued by you, Menelaos, in the dread battle.
> But when they were coming near to one another,
> the son of Atreus missed the mark and the spear was turned alongside him (Peisandros).
> Peisandros hit the shield of glorious Menelaos,
> but he could not draw the bronze straight through,
> for the broad shield held and the spear was snapped off at the shaft,
> but he (Menelaos) drawing his silver studded sword
> leapt at Peisandros, but he (Peisandros) under his shield held his beautiful
> axe of fine bronze, upon a long well polished
> olive wood axe handle. At the same time they came at one another.
> And verily he (Peisandros) struck at the high peak of the horse hair crested helmet
> by the very crest, and he (Menelaos) struck him as he advanced,

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[8] A similar usage appears in book 22, wherein we find, in relation to the events leading up to Hektor's demise, the following lines: Ἕκτορα δ' αὐτοῦ μεῖναι ὀλοιὴ μοῖρα πέδησεν / Ἰλίου προπάροιθε πυλάων τε Σκαιάων (*Il.* 22.5-6), 'But destructive fate caught fast Hektor so that he remained / on the spot before Ilion and the Skaian gates'.

> on the forehead over the nose, and he smashed the bones and both of his (Peisandros') eyes fell bleeding to the ground in the dust, before his feet.
> Falling, he curled up.

In the above passage, the poet begins with a direct address to Menelaos, recalling to him certain events involved in the death of Peisandros.[9] By interrupting the typical third person narrative in this way, the narrator breaks the illusion that events are taking place as the poem is performed. The narrator is distancing events in time and narrative context. Here, then, we find μοῖρα named in conjunction with the genitive of θάνατος, (ἄγε μοῖρα κακὴ θανάτοιο τέλοσδε, the evil fate lead him to the end of death). In this side-note, the death has already occurred and as a point of history is not an immediate reality. It is from here that the passage goes on to return to its sense of taking place in the present, and resumes the third person narration by the seemingly omniscient narrator, and it is from here that the sense of death becomes more immediate and threatening. As the passage takes the audience to the actual moment of Peisandros' death, bringing it closer in time, the passage also becomes more and more biological in its depiction of the event. By the time the scene culminates with the actual death, death is described in all of its horrific physical detail, but is not named again.

Some of the most interesting appearances of μοῖρα as it relates to death are found in conjunction with references to the Olympian gods. In book 15, Ares says the following:

> μὴ νῦν μοι νεμεσήσετ', 'Ολύμπια δώματ' ἔχοντες,
> τείσασθαι φόνον υἷος ἰόντ' ἐπὶ νῆας 'Αχαιῶν,
> εἴ πέρ μοι καὶ μοῖρα Διὸς πληγέντι κεραυνῷ
> κεῖσθαι ὁμοῦ νεκύεσσι μεθ' αἵματι καὶ κονίῃσιν. (*Il.* 15.115-118)

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[9] DeJong 1989 remarks on the use of the second person singular in direct address, and says that while such addresses are formally spoken to the poem's characters, they are actually meant for the audience (the primary narratee-focalizee) and help bring the audience into the text. She says "...the NF_1 does not just produce his story, regardless of his recipient , but instead takes heed of that recipient, steering the latter's reception. I therefore propose to describe the communicative process between the NF_1 and the NeFe_1, as *interaction*: although NeFe_1 nowhere speaks himself, his very evocation as recipient nevertheless conditions the presentation of the NF_1" p. 60.

> Now do not be vexed at me, you who have homes on Olympos,
> going among the Achaian ships in order to exact the penalty for the slaughter of my son,
> even though it be my fate having been struck by Zeus' thunderbolt
> to lie amongst the corpses in blood and dust.

On the surface μοῖρα seems, in this passage, to be the fate that consists in death, and hence appears to be a word for death, given that the fate being mentioned is to 'lie with the dead among blood and dust'. If the speaker were mortal, and dying were indeed a possibility, this passage would be much like others in which death is named in a discussion concerning its likelihood or probability, as there is no immediate threat at hand. In this instance, however, the threat is even more remote than usual, in that the speaker is an Olympian, and cannot die. For Ares to speak about being struck by the bolt of Zeus to sprawl amid dust and blood with dead men is merely an exaggeration made by a petulant god. The audience knows fully well that Ares is not going to be killed, and hence death is entirely safe to name. The worst that may befall Ares is that he be cast down to join the company of corpses in the carnage which is his own handiwork, since as the god of war (one of the ἄμβροτοι θεοὶ ἀεὶ ἔοντες, the immortal gods always existing)[10], the true mortal experience of death is not something which he can ever know.

The gods may not be able to experience dying first hand, but they do, to some extent, experience the sense of loss that comes upon survivors.[11] One of the most discussed passages concerning fate in the *Iliad* is that in which Zeus laments the approaching death of his son Sarpedon (a scene in which foreshadowing and grief coexist in time, as though future, present and past are all one moment to the immortals), and contemplates altering the course of destined events:

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[10] Certainly there are myths concerning dying gods (e.g. Zeus on Crete, Dionysos, Persephone etc.). However, the myth which tells of Zeus' tomb on Crete seems to be a Cretan (i.e. Minoan) variation, and does not figure in the Greek tellings of Zeus' struggles to gain power. Dionysos and Persephone are resurrection gods who descend to the underworld but return again (a symbolic death and rebirth). The one Greek god who truly does die and does not return is Asclepius, who outraged Zeus by trying to reverse the effects of death on the mortal Hippolytos. However, this seems to be a punishment made to fit the crime, and is certainly not typical of the gods' experience.

[11] It is also worth noting that the loathing of death and the somewhat apotropaic desire to avoid it may also be something that the gods understand on a first hand basis. For example, in Euripides' *Hippolytos*, Artemis deliberately removes herself from Hippolytos' company as his life is about to depart.

> ὤ μοι ἐγών, ὅ τέ μοι Σαρπηδόνα, φίλτατον ἀνδρῶν,
> μοῖρ᾽ ὑπὸ Πατρόκλοιο Μενοιτιάδαο δαμῆναι.
> διχθὰ δέ μοι κραδίη μέμονε φρεσὶν ὁρμαίνοντι,
> ἤ μιν ζωὸν ἐόντα μάχης ἄπο δακρυοέσσης
> θείω ἀναρπάξας Λυκίης ἐν πίονι δήμῳ,
> ἢ ἤδη ὑπὸ χερσὶ Μενοιτιάδαο δαμάσσω. (*Il.* 16.433-438)
>
> Ah me, it is fate that the dearest of men to me, Sarpedon,
> be subdued at the hands of Patroklos, son of Menoitios.
> The heart in my breast longs with a twofold wish as I consider,
> whether snatching him up alive from the lamentable battlefield
> I should place him among the rich folk of Lykia,
> or subdue him under the hands of the son of Menoitios.

As B. Fenik has noted, this passage has two typical features: a duel between two warriors is interrupted for a scene on Olympos where the fate of one of the men is being discussed, and the dialogue pattern of the speech between Zeus and Hera.[12]

The μοῖρα mentioned in the second line of this passage is likely fate as it relates to death, since it is the impending death of his son about which Zeus speaks. It may also be an example of Zeus lamenting his own μοῖρα of losing Sarpedon, which would raise interesting questions for those who claim that Zeus' will and fate are one. Here the relevant point is that death is evoked by the word μοῖρα. It hardly needs pointing out that death is not any sort of immediate threat (especially to the father of gods and men), and it is being discussed as a possibility for the hero Sarpedon at some point in the future. Zeus is still of two minds concerning how to act, and so it might be argued (against the notion of fate being what is predestined because it is what must be, and what on some level has already happened), that there is as yet no certainty of death's imminence.

Μοῖρα also appears as a word for death in passages in which a character makes reference to a death in the past. As in examples wherein death is discussed as a mere possibility belonging to a future time, death is at times named in passages discussing events which, from the perspective of the poem's characters, have already occurred. As is the case with death in the future, death in the past is remote, and is therefore safe to name, in this case in hendiadys. For evidence of this, one may look to book 17:

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[12] Fenik 1968 p. 203.

> ᾿Αλκίμεδον, τίς γάρ τοι ᾿Αχαιῶν ἄλλος ὁμοῖος
> ἵππων ἀθανάτων ἐχέμεν δμῆσίν τε μένος τε,
> εἰ μὴ Πάτροκλος, θεόφιν μήστωρ ἀτάλαντος,
> ζωὸς ἐών; νῦν αὖ θάνατος καὶ μοῖρα κιχάνει. (*Il.*17.475-478) [13]
>
> Alkimedon, what other man of the Achaians, equal to you,
> would be able to hold the deathless horses and their strength,
> if not Patroklos, an adviser equal to the gods,
> while he lived? Now death and fate have found him in turn.

In some contexts, we find μοῖρα mentioned as a death related word in conjunction with both future and past points in time. For example:

> οὐδὲ γὰρ οὐδὲ βίη ῾Ηρακλῆος φύγε κῆρα,
> ὅς περ φίλτατος ἔσκε Διὶ Κρονίωνι ἄνακτι·
> ἀλλά ἑ μοῖρα δάμασσε καὶ ἀργαλέος χόλος Ἥρης.
> ὣς καὶ ἐγών, εἰ δή μοι ὁμοίη μοῖρα τέτυκται,
> κείσομ᾿ ἐπεί κε θάνω· (*Il.* 18.117-121)
>
> For not even the might of Herakles fled destruction,
> even though he was dearest to the lord Zeus, son of Kronos,
> but fate subdued him, and the grievous anger of Hera.
> And so I, if indeed such a fate is fashioned for me,
> will lie still when I am dead.

Αἶσα, as already discussed, is often viewed as sharing a range of meanings with μοῖρα (including those relating to death). In reality, αἶσα as a term *directly* connected to the end of life is somewhat rare (more often than not it refers to life itself). In fact, it is only found very clearly in connection with death seven times throughout the entire poem.

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[13] This use is repeated, again with reference to Patroklos, in πᾶσιν γὰρ ἐπίστατο μείλιχος εἶναι / ζωὸς ἐών· νῦν αὖ θάνατος και μοῖρα κιχάνει (*Il.* 17.671-672), 'For he understood how to be gentle to all / while he lived. But now death and fate have met with him in turn'. The death of Hektor is also referred to after the fact with these same words, as we see in Hekuba's words of lament νῦν αὖ θάνατος καὶ μοῖρα κιχάνει (*Il.* 22.436), 'but now death and fate have met with him in turn'.

From Hektor we hear οὐ γάρ τίς μ' ὑπὲρ αἶσαν ἀνὴρ Ἄϊδι προϊάψει· / μοῖραν δ' οὔ τινά φημι πεφυγμένον ἔμμεναι ἀνδρῶν... (*Il.* 6.487-488)[14], 'For no man will send me to Hades beyond due fate, / and I say that there is no one among men who escapes destiny', and from Priam εἰ δέ μοι αἶσα / τεθνάμεναι παρὰ νηυσὶν Ἀχαιῶν χαλκοχιτώνων, / βούλομαι (*Il.* 24.224-226), 'If it is my due fate / to die alongside the ships of the bronze clad Achaians, / then I wish it'. In the first instance, the common phrase ὑπὲρ αἶσαν, which typically means no more than 'beyond measure' or 'beyond what is fated', is in this case connected with death insofar as the 'fate' which αἶσα implies is here clearly the 'fate to die'. The idea is explicit that no man will send Hektor to Hades' realm contrary to his own allotted fate, which is to die at the appropriate place and time. His death cannot happen in any other way than in accordance with αἶσα, which is what must be by necessity. Death does not occur outside of its prescribed limits, and αἶσα here is that inexorable order which sets those limits. This is the usage we find in the passage mentioned from book 24 as well. If it is Priam's αἶσα τεθνάμεναι (fate to die), then it is necessity, and has, on some level, already occurred. There is no use railing against inflexible fate, and so, he concludes, if this is ordained, it is what he wishes. There is no wisdom in attempting to thwart fate, or go against the natural cycle of life and death in which all mortals have a part, each at their appropriate times.

As was noted with μοῖρα, when αἶσα is mentioned in direct relation to death, death is being discussed as something which may or may not be looming close. As something which in its appointed time and place is inevitable, and even comforting, it allows one a place in the cycle of the natural world. It is interesting to note that αἶσα, unlike μοῖρα as it appears in a number of contexts, does not seem to be associated with any particular sense of dread or dismay. Rather, in the two passages cited above it seems that contemplation of αἶσα in relation to dying fills one with a sense of quiet resignation and inner peace, as opposed to stark terror (it is, after all, what is 'equitable' and 'right'). As αἶσα is a feminine word, this is particularly worth noting, since Vernant has claimed (as discussed earlier) that feminine death terms denote death in its negative aspect, while the 'good' death is referred to by the masculine term θάνατος.

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[14] This passage has already been mentioned in connection with μοῖρα on page 88.

There are five more appearances of αἶσα as a death term within the poem. Twice we hear of goddesses reproaching Zeus for interfering with the allotted fates (i.e. 'deaths') of mortals:

> Τὸν δ' ἠμείβετ' ἔπειτα βοῶπις πότνια Ἥρη·
> αἰνότατε Κρονίδη ποῖον τὸν μῦθον ἔειπες.
> ἄνδρα θνητὸν ἐόντα πάλαι πεπρωμένον αἴσῃ
> ἂψ ἐθέλεις θανάτοιο δυσηχέος ἐξαναλῦσαι; (*Il.* 16.439-442)
>
> Next queenly cow-eyed Hera answered him,
> 'Most dread son of Kronos, what sort of word have you spoken?
> Do you wish to set free a mortal man, doomed of old by appointed fate,
> Back from grim sounding death?

and:

> Τὸν δ' αὖτε προσέειπε θεὰ γλαυκῶπις 'Αθήνη·
> ὦ πάτερ ἀργικέραυνε κελαινεφὲς οἷον ἔειπες·
> ἄνδρα θνητὸν ἐόντα πάλαι πεπρωμένον αἴσῃ
> ἂψ ἐθέλεις θανάτοιο δυσηχέος ἐξαναλῦσαι; (*Il.* 22.177-180)
>
> Then the grey-eyed goddess Athena answered him,
> "Father dark clouded with white lightning, what sort of thing have you said?
> Do you wish to set free a mortal man, doomed of old by appointed fate
> Back from grim sounding death?

The αἶσα being mentioned here is clearly death, but, of course, in neither case is the death occurring in the present, and even if it were, deities seem to be at greater liberty than mortals to name death. It is interesting to note, as I. J. F. DeJong has done, that at various points throughout the poem, virtually the same words are spoken to Zeus by both Athena and Hera, and yet they tend to ellicit very different responses. While Zeus' affection for his daughter is manifested in his responses to her, he tends to be more abrupt with Hera, giving in to her will without answering her.[15]

Also falling into this same category of usage wherein a deity names death is the following, spoken by the goddess Thetis to her still living son, νῦν δ' ἅμα τ' ὠκύμορος καὶ ὀϊζυρὸς περὶ πάντων / ἔπλεο· τώ σε κακῇ αἴσῃ τέκον ἐν μεγάροισι (*Il.* 1.417-418), 'But now it has transpired that (your life be) short lived and bitter beyond that of all men. / To a bitter apportioned fate I bore you in my halls'.

Two more appearances of αἶσα as a death term with the genitive of θάνατος are found in speeches by Hektor's parents, after his death. Both Priam and Hecuba remark that the gods care for 'Hektor even in the fate of death':

> Ὣς φάτο, γήθησεν δ' ὁ γέρων, καὶ ἀμείβετο μύθῳ·
> ὦ τέκος, ἦ ῥ' ἀγαθὸν καὶ ἐναίσιμα δῶρα διδοῦναι
> ἀθανάτοις, ἐπεὶ οὔ ποτ' ἐμὸς πάϊς, εἴ ποτ' ἔην γε,
> λήθετ' ἐνὶ μεγάροισι θεῶν οἳ Ὄλυμπον ἔχουσι·
> τώ οἱ ἀπεμνήσαντο καὶ ἐν θανάτοιό περ αἴσῃ.
> ἀλλ' ἄγε δὴ τόδε δέξαι ἐμεῦ πάρα καλὸν ἄλεισον,
> αὐτόν τε ῥῦσαι, πέμψον δέ με σύν γε θεοῖσιν,
> ὄφρά κεν ἐς κλισίην Πηληϊάδεω ἀφίκωμαι. (*Il.* 24.424-431)
>
> So he spoke, and the old man became glad and answered him with a speech,
> 'Oh child, surely it is a good thing to give proper gifts
> to the gods, since my own child never, if ever he was,
> was forgetful within his halls of the gods who hold Olympos,
> and so they were mindful of him, even in the apportioned fate of death.
> But come then, and receive this fine embossed cup from me
> and protect me myself, and escort me with the gods (willing),
> until I arrive at the tent of the son of Peleus.

as well as:

> Ὣς ἔφατο κλαίουσ', ἐπὶ δὲ στενάχοντο γυναῖκες.
> τῇσιν δ' αὖθ' Ἑκάβη ἁδινοῦ ἐξῆρχε γόοιο·
> Ἕκτορ ἐμῷ θυμῷ πάντων πολὺ φίλτατε παίδων,
> ἦ μέν μοι ζωός περ ἐὼν φίλος ἦσθα θεοῖσιν·
> οἳ δ' ἄρα σεῦ κήδοντο καὶ ἐν θανάτοιό περ αἴσῃ. (*Il.* 24.746-750)

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[15] DeJong 1989 p. 189-190.

> So she spoke weeping, and the women groaned about her.
> But now Hekabe began the loud chant of their sorrow;
> "Hektor, by far the dearest of children to my spirit,
> indeed while still alive for me, you were dear to the gods,
> and they care for you still even in the apportioned fate of death.

The death named in these passages has already taken place–the body is rendered a corpse, and naming death can in no way cause further suffering.

In all of the above mentioned passages, death is not immediately at hand, and the end of life is not something which belongs to the present moment in the poetic narrative.

There are similar uses of πότμος. In book 2 we find the following hendiadys linking πότμος and θάνατος: εἰ δέ τις ἐκπάγλως ἐθέλει οἶκόνδε νέεσθαι, / ἁπτέσθω ἧς νηὸς ἐϋσσέλμοιο μελαίνης, / ὄφρα πρόσθ' ἄλλων θάνατον καὶ πότμον ἐπίσπῃ (*Il.* 2.357-359), 'But if someone wishes greatly to go homeward, / let him grasp his well benched black ship / so that before others he might pursue death and destiny'. In this instance, πότμος and θάνατος are both discussed in character speeches, and neither of them presently threaten to strike. Similarly, in book 4, ἀλλά μοι αἰνὸν ἄχος σέθεν ἔσσεται, ὦ Μενέλαε, / αἴ κε θάνῃς καὶ πότμον ἀναπλήσῃς βιότοιο (*Il.* 4.169-170) 'But there will be a dread grief for me on your behalf, Menelaos, / if you should die and accomplish the destiny of your life', and in book 6:

> ...ἐμοὶ δέ κε κέρδιον εἴη
> σεῦ ἀφαμαρτούσῃ χθόνα δύμεναι· οὐ γὰρ ἔτ' ἄλλη
> ἔσται θαλπωρή , ἐπεὶ ἂν σύ γε πότμον ἐπίσπῃς,
> ἀλλ' ἄχε'· (*Il.* 6.410-413)
>
> ...but it would be better for me
> to sink into the earth once I have lost you, for there will be no
> other consolation, once you have pursued your destiny,
> but griefs.

Other such examples of the fate of death (that which befalls one) being named in discussion may be found in the speech of Helenos to Hektor, already mentioned on page 76 of this chapter (*Il.* 7.52), as well as in Hektor's words to the Trojans and Lykians, which again link πότμος and θάνατος in hendiadys ...ὅς δέ κεν ὑμέων / βλήμενος ἠὲ τυπεὶς θάνατον καὶ πότμον ἐπίσπῃ / τεθνάτω (*Il.* 15.494-496), 'He among you who, having been struck or wounded obtains death and destiny, / let him die', as well as in Thetis' words to her son Achilles, ὠκύμορος δή μοι, τέκος, ἔσσεαι, οἷ ' ἀγορεύεις· / αὐτίκα γάρ τοι ἔπειτα μεθ' Ἕκτορα πότμος ἑτοῖμος (*Il.* 18.95-96), 'Indeed for me (you will be) short lived, child, according to the things which you say, / for straightway after Hektor, your destiny is at hand'. One may also look at Poseidon's advice to Aeneas (which also employs hendiadys), spoken with a view to some future time, αὐτὰρ ἐπεί κ' Ἀχιλεὺς θάνατον καὶ πότμον ἐπίσπῃ, / θαρσήσας δὴ ἔπειτα μετὰ πρώτοισι μάχεσθαι (*Il.* 20.337-338), 'But once Achilles obtains his death and destiny, / then taking courage fight among the foremost men'.

Only twice in the entire poem does πότμος appear on its own, without the aid of a form of θάνατος or ἀποθνήσκω. Nonetheless, even in these contexts, πότμος is clearly used to denote the fate of death, and it is a death that does not reach its fulfillment. Agenor proclaims to Achilles, after boasting of the great resolution on the part of the Trojans to protect their homes, ...σὺ δ' ἐνθάδε πότμον ἐφέψεις, / ὧδ' ἔκπαγλος ἐὼν καὶ θαρσαλέος πολεμιστής (*Il.* 21.588-589), '...but there you will obtain destiny, / although being such a fearful and bold warrior', and in book 22 we find Priam beseeching Hektor not to engage Achilles in battle with the words ...ἵνα μὴ τάχα πότμον ἐπίσπῃς / Πηλείωνι δαμείς, ἐπεὶ ἦ πολὺ φέρτερός ἐστι (*Il* 22.39-40), 'so that you not soon reach your destiny, / having been subdued by Peleion, since he is by far mightier'.

Turning attention to κήρ, the same general practice demonstrated in the consideration of death words thus far treated is maintained. Appearances of this word are plentiful throughout the poem (it is used forty-six times in total), and so, as a result, only a rather cursory list of passages and the categories into which they fall may be dealt with here, and in following chapters, only the more interesting passages will be discussed in detail.

We find numerous references to κήρ used as a death word, in passages wherein death is being discussed but is not a present reality. Falling into this category are the passages which follow.

Achilles names death to Agamemnon in their verbal conflict, saying to him:

> οἰνοβαρές, κυνὸς ὄμματ᾽ ἔχων, κραδίην δ᾽ ἐλάφοιο,
> οὔτε ποτ᾽ ἐς πόλεμον ἅμα λαῷ θωρηχθῆναι
> οὔτε λόχονδ᾽ ἰέναι σὺν ἀριστήεσσιν Ἀχαιῶν
> τέτληκας θυμῷ· τὸ δέ τοι κὴρ εἴδεται εἶναι. (*Il.* 1.225-228)
>
> You, heavy with drink, possessing the eyes of a dog and the heart of a hind,not ever have you dared in your heart to be armed for battle amongst the people nor to go into ambush with the best of the Achaians, for to you this thing seems to be violent death.

Odysseus addresses his companions as μάρτυροι, οὓς μὴ κῆρες ἔβαν θανάτοιο φέρουσαι (*Il.* 2.302), 'witnesses, whom the violent death spirits have not come carrying off', while Nestor reminds the Greeks of their original purpose in coming to Troy, saying φημὶ γὰρ οὖν κατανεῦσαι ὑπερμενέα Κρονίωνα / ἤματι τῷ ὅτε νηυσὶν ἐν ὠκυπόροισιν ἔβαινον / Ἀργεῖοι Τρώεσσι φόνον καὶ κῆρα φέροντες (*Il.* 2.350-352), 'For I say, therefore, that the overweening son of Kronos promised / on that day when we went in fast rowing vessels /, we, the Argive men, bearing blood and violent death to the Trojans'. The men under the command of Pandaros are described as being led on by the κῆρες μέλανος θανάτοιο (*Il.* 2.834)[16], 'the dark fates of death', and death in the guise of κήρ is mentioned in a simile comparing the approach of the Trojans to battle with the flooding of Okeanos, ἀνδράσι Πυγμαίοισι φόνον καὶ κῆρα φέρουσαι (*Il.*

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[16] We also hear of κῆρες μέλανος θανάτοιο (the dark violent spirits of death) driving on the sons of Merops (*Il.* 11.332), resulting in their death at the hands of Diomedes in the very next line. Although death occurs almost immediately after the reference to the κῆρες, κήρ is viewed as an instigator in the events leading up to the deaths, not as the actual dispenser of death itself.

3.6), 'bringing to the Pygmaian men blood and violent death'. Meanwhile, of Paris, we hear:

> ἀλλ' οὔ τις δύνατο Τρώων κλειτῶν τ' ἐπικούρων
> δεῖξαι 'Αλέξανδρον τότ' ἀρηϊφίλῳ Μενελάῳ·
> οὐ μὲν γὰρ φιλότητί γ' ἐκεύθανον, εἴ τις ἴδοιτο·
> ἶσον γάρ σφιν πᾶσιν ἀπήχθετο κηρὶ μελαίνῃ. (*Il.* 3.451-454).
>
> But no man of the Trojans or the renowned allies was able
> to display Alexandros to war-loving Menelaos then,
> for they did not hide him on account of friendship, if any man had seen
> him,for he was hated by all of them equally to dark violent death.

To Tlepolemos, Sarpedon says the following, naming death that has not yet happened (although it will very shortly), σοὶ δ' ἐγὼ ἐνθάδε φημὶ φόνον καὶ κῆρα μέλαιναν / ἐξ ἐμέθεν τεύξεσθαι, ἐμῷ δ' ὑπὸ δουρὶ δαμέντα / εὖχος ἐμοὶ δώσειν, ψυχὴν δ' Ἄϊδι κλυτοπώλῳ (*Il.* 5.652-654)[17], 'But I say that here blood and dark violent death for you / will be fashioned from me, and subdued under my spear / you will give me glory, and to Hades famed for horses, your spirit'. Zeus is said to weigh δύο κῆρε τανηλεγέος θανάτοιο (the two destructive fates which stretch one at length) in his golden scale (*Il.* 8.70), in order to determine which way the battle will go on a certain day, with the result that αἱ μὲν 'Αχαιῶν κῆρες ἐπὶ χθονὶ πουλυβοτείρῃ / ἑζέσθην, Τρώων δὲ πρὸς οὐρανὸν εὐρὺν ἄερθεν· (*Il.* 8.73-74)[18], 'The destructive fates of the

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[17] These lines are repeated almost exactly by Odysseus to Sokos (with the substitution of ἤματι τῷδ' ἔσσεσθαι, 'on this day there will be', for ἐξ ἐμέθεν τεύξεσθαι, 'will be fashioned from me') in *Il.* 11.443-445.

[18] We find κήρ being weighed on the scales of Zeus again in *Il.* 22.209-213:

> καὶ τότε δὴ χρύσεια πατὴρ ἐτίταινε τάλαντα,
> ἐν δὲ τίθει δύο κῆρε τανηλεγέος θανάτοιο,
> τὴν μὲν 'Αχιλλῆδος, τὴν δ' Ἕκτορος ἱπποδάμοιο,
> ἕλκε δὲ μέσσα λαβών· ῥέπε δ' Ἕκτορος αἴσιμον ἦμαρ,
> ᾤχετο δ' εἰς 'Αϊδαο, λίπεν δέ ἑ Φοῖβος 'Απόλλων.
>
> And then the father spread out his golden scales,
> and on them he placed two destructive fates of death, which draw men out,
> one for Achilles and one for Hektor, breaker of horses,
> and taking it he weighed it in the middle, and the fated day of Hektor fell

Achaians sank to the much-nourishing earth / but the fates of the Trojans were lifted to the broad heavens'. Hektor refers to the Greeks as dogs οὓς κῆρες φορέουσι μελαινάων ἐπὶ νηῶν (*Il.* 8.528), 'whom violent deaths carry from the black ships', and Achilles speaks of his κήρ as being twofold, saying μήτηρ γάρ τέ μέ φησι θεὰ Θέτις ἀργυρόπεζα / διχθαδίας κῆρας φερέμεν θανάτοιο τέλοσδε (*Il.* 9.410-411), 'My mother, the silver-footed goddess Thetis,/ tells me that I bear a double destiny towards the end of death'. Meanwhile, in book 12, we find an interesting reference to the difficulty in evading κήρ, and indeed, the warrior (Asios) under siege by this impersonal force does go on to die within the next several lines. However, this reference to κήρ appears as a foreshadowing of events to come, and is quite distinctly separated from the actual (very lengthy and descriptive) death scene. We hear of Asios ...οὐδ' ἄρ' ἔμελλε κακὰς ὑπὸ κῆρας ἀλύξας (*Il.* 12.113), 'for he was not going to escape out from under the evil destructive fates', and yet we are not told about his death until later. Even then, at the point at which we assume that his death has taken place, it isn't made overly clear. Rather, it is implied by the fact that Asios has spoken aloud to Zeus, and that οὐδὲ Διὸς πεῖθε φρένα ταῦτ' ἀγορεύων (*Il.* 12.173), 'saying these things he did not persuade the mind of Zeus'.

One of the most remarkable scenes in the poem has Sarpedon mention κήρ in the plural to Glaukos (*Il.* 12.322-328, cited and translated on page 21 of chapter 1). Often translated as 'death spirits', these forms of death appear in a discussion concerning the necessity of dying. Death is not at this moment in the poem in the act of taking or receiving a life, but it is being considered somewhat philosophically.

Likewise, these dreadful 'death spirits' are mentioned in the speech of Idomeneus, lord of the Cretans, to Meriones. B. Fenik has remarked upon how unique this speech is

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and went down to Hades' house, and Phoibos Apollo left him.

within the poem, pointing out that the length and subject matter are atypical of battle scenes.[19] Once again, the discussion is one in which real death is held at a distance:

> τοῦ μὲν γάρ τε κακοῦ τρέπεται χρὼς ἄλλυδις ἄλλῃ,
> οὐδέ οἱ ἀτρέμας ἧσθαι ἐρητύετ᾽ ἐν φρεσὶ θυμός,
> ἀλλὰ μετοκλάζει καὶ ἐπ᾽ ἀμφοτέρους πόδας ἵζει,
> ἐν δέ οἱ κραδίη μεγάλα στέρνοισι πατάσσει
> κῆρας ὀϊομένῳ, πάταγος δέ τε γίγνετ᾽ ὀδόντων·
> τοῦ δ᾽ ἀγαθοῦ οὔτ᾽ ἂρ᾽ τρέπεται χρὼς οὔτε τι λίην
> ταρβει (*Il.* 13.279-285)
>
> For the skin of a coward changes from one way to another,
> and the spirit in his breast does not restrain itself to sit untrembling,
> but he shifts on his knees and then settles on both feet,
> and within his chest the heart throbs greatly
> as he thinks of the destructive death spirits, and a chattering of the teeth begins. But the skin of a courageous man does not change, nor does he fear in any way excessively.

Other such references to κήρ involving contemplation or discussion of death in which that act of dying is not immediately present are numerous. We hear of Euchenor, ...ῥ᾽ εὖ εἰδὼς κῆρ᾽ ὀλοὴν ἐπὶ νηὸς ἔβαινε (*Il.* 13.665), '...knowing well his destructive fate, he embarked upon the ship', and it is said of Patroklos ἦ γὰρ ἔμελλεν / οἷ αὐτῷ θάνατόν τε κακὸν καὶ κῆρα λιτέσθαι (*Il.* 16.46-47), 'he was about to entreat his own death and evil destruction'. As B. Fenik has noted, Euchenor is interesting in that he shares so many similarities with Achilles. Like Achilles, Euchenor knew that he could choose one of two fates. He could make the choice to stay home and die from a dreadful illness or come to Troy and be killed in battle. Achilles is forewarned concerning his fates by his mother, Thetis, while Euchenor was told his future by his priestly father, and both men perish from arrows shot by Paris.[20] In a sense, Euchenor's death foreshadows Achilles' own.

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[19] Fenik 1968 p. 129
[20] Ibid., p. 148.

Achilles himself mentions κήρ twice during his confrontation with Hektor, and says:

> νῦν δ' εἶμ', ὄφρα φίλης κεφαλῆς ὀλετῆρα κιχείω,
> Ἕκτορα· κῆρα δ' ἐγὼ τότε δέξομαι, ὁππότε κεν δὴ
> Ζεὺς ἐθέλῃ τελέσαι ἠδ' ἀθάνατοι θεοὶ ἄλλοι.
> οὐδὲ γὰρ οὐδὲ βίη Ἡρακλῆος φύγε κῆρα,
> ὅς περ φίλτατος ἔσκε Διὶ Κρονίωνι ἄνακτι·(*Il.* 18.114-118)[21]
>
> **Now I will go so that I might come across the destroyer of a dear life,**
> **Hektor, and then I will receive violent death**
> **whenever Zeus desires to bring it to fulfillment, and the other immortals.**
> **For not even the strength of Herakles fled death,**
> **he who was the dearest of all to lord Zeus son of Kronos.**

Of Lykaon in an encounter with Achilles it is said that περὶ δ' ἤθελε θυμῷ / ἐκφυγέειν θάνατόν τε κακὸν καὶ κῆρα μέλαιναν (*Il.* 21. 65-66), 'he wished in his spirit to flee from death and black destructive fate'. While Agenor debates with himself concerning the best course of action for the purpose of avoiding being slaughtered, he considers the option of running to the plain of Ilion and hiding until dark. Realizing that it is likely that Achilles will see him and overtake him before he reaches safety, he says οὐκέτ' ἔπειτ' ἔσται θάνατον καὶ κῆρας ἀλύξαι (*Il.* 21.565), 'Then it will no longer be possible to avoid death and the destructive death spirits'.

An interesting post-mortem reflection on κήρ is found in the speech of the shade of Patroklos upon his visit to Achilles to request burial. The shade beseeches Achilles to release him, saying that they can never be companions again, ἐμὲ μὲν κὴρ / ἀμφέχανε στυγερή, ἥ περ λάχε γιγνόμενον περ (*Il.* 23.78-79), 'for a hateful violent death / has yawned wide for me, which was assigned to me when I was born'.

Κήρ as a death word also appears in a highly descriptive passage about Iris: ἡ δὲ μολυβδαίνῃ ἰκέλη ἐς βυσσὸν ὄρουσεν, / ἥ τε κατ' ἀγραύλοιο βοὸς κέρας ἐμβεβαυῖα / ἔρχεται ὠμηστῇσιν ἐπ' ἰχθύσι κῆρα φέρουσα (*Il.* 24.80-82),' She rushed violently to the sea floor, like a plummet / mounted on the horn of a field-dwelling ox / goes bearing violent death to the raw-flesh eating fish'.

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[21] This sentiment is repeated after Hektor dies, and Achilles standing over the corpse says τέθναθι· κῆρα δ' ἐγὼ τότε δέξομαι, ὁππότε κεν δὴ / Ζεὺς ἐθέλῃ τελέσαι ἠδ' ἀθάνατοι θεοὶ ἄλλοι (*Il.* 22.365-366), 'Die, and I will myself receive violent death whenever / Zeus wishes to bring it to fulfillment, and the other immortals'.

When it comes to instances in which the poet wishes to name a death that is avoided or escaped (and hence does not occur), κήρ is, in the vast majority of cases, the death word of choice. Κήρ is typically the word for the death which never happens, and as such is often a *negation* of death. The following are the passages in which κήρ is used to denote the *unaccomplished* death.

Of Paris the poem says ἂψ δ' ἑτάρων εἰς ἔθνος ἐχάζετο κῆρ' ἀλεείων (*Il.* 3.32), 'He retired into the company of companions, avoiding violent death', and that ὁ δ' ἐκλίνθη καὶ ἀλεύατο κῆρα μέλαιναν (*Il.* 3.360), 'he bent aside and he avoided black violent death'. Later, Aphrodite intervenes in the one on one combat between Menelaos and Paris, and saving her favourite αὐτοῦ κῆρας ἀμύνει (*Il.* 4.11), 'she wards off violent death spirits from him'.[22]

As B. Fenik writes (commenting on *Il.* 17.106-122), "The slow retreat of one fighter in the face of a large number of the enemy is a type scene: Odysseus at Λ 411, Aias at Λ 545, Antilochos at N 550. The way Menelaos withdraws from Hector is directly related to the retreats in these other three scenes. The man pulls back slowly, occasionally turning to face his pursuers, until he finally reaches safety."[23] Nonetheless, the hasty disappearance of the warrior into a crowd of his own men in order to dodge a blow is also a common occurence.

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[22] This is not the only instance of a god warding off the death spirit from a beloved mortal. Elsewhere Hephaistos interferes with the function of κήρ:

> Ἰδαῖος δ' ἀπόρουσε λιπὼν περικαλλέα δίφρον,
> οὐδ' ἔτλη περιβῆναι ἀδελφειοῦ κταμένοιο·
> οὐδὲ γὰρ οὐδέ κεν αὐτὸς ὑπέκφυγε κῆρα μέλαιναν,
> ἀλλ' Ἥφαιστος ἔρυτο, σάωσε δὲ νυκτὶ καλύψας,
> ὡς δή οἱ μὴ πάγχυ γέρων ἀκαχήμενος εἴη. (*Il.* 5.20-24)
>
> And Idaios leapt off leaving the very beautiful chariot,
> nor did he dare to stand over his slain brother,
> nor yet would he himself have escaped the black violent death,
> but Hephaistos rescued him and covering him with night saved him,
> so that the old man would not be totally distressed.

Moreover, Zeus does the same thing for his son Sarpedon, as we hear in the following: ἀλλὰ Ζεὺς κῆρας ἄμυνε / παιδὸς ἑοῦ... (*Il.* 12.402-403), 'but Zeus warded off violent death / from his son...'.

Hektor, too, is skillful in avoiding κῆρ. For example, ὁ δ' ἐκλίνθη καὶ ἀλεύατο κῆρα μέλαιναν (*Il.* 7.254), 'he bent aside and avoided black violent death', just as Paris did in *Il.* 3.360. One should not necessarily regard the avoidance of κῆρ as cowardly, since Hektor is typically portrayed as possessing the utmost of heroic valour. Again, (of Hektor) ἀλεύατο κῆρα μέλαιναν in *Il.* 11.360, 'he avoided black violent death', and ἑτάρων εἰς ἔθνος ἐχάζετο κῆρ' ἀλεείνων (*Il.* 14.408), 'he retired into the company of companions, avoiding death'. Thoas, speaking out among the Danaans, says of him with a sense of wonder that ἀνέστη κῆρας ἀλύξας (*Il.* 15.287), 'he has stood up, having avoided the destructive death spirits'.

Other heroes also avoid κῆρ. Eurypylos shrinks into the crowd of his companions in order to escape it (*Il.* 11.585), as does Antilochos in *Il.* 13.566, (although he is killed immediately afterwards by Meriones).[24] Helenos also withdraws into a crowd to avoid κῆρ (*Il.* 13.596) after battling with Menelaos, and we hear of Poulydamas αὐτὸς μὲν ἀλεύατο κῆρα μέλαιναν / λικριφὶς ἀΐξας (*Il.* 14.462-463), 'he himself avoided black violent death / having darted sideways'. Meanwhile, Patroklos has similarly repositioned himself ἂν ὑπέκφυγε κῆρα κακὴν μέλανος θανάτοιο. / ἀλλ ' αἰεί τε Διὸς κρείσσων νόος ἠέ περ ἀνδρῶν (*Il.* 16.687-688), 'so that he might avoid the evil destruction of black death. / But always the mind of Zeus is mightier that that of men'. Nonetheless, these lines only serve to set the tone for the battle between Patroklos and Hektor. Hektor does not succeed in taking the life of Patroklos until line 828, and when the climactic moment arrives, death is given no name. Rather, the situation is expressed with the words ὥς πολέας πεφνόντα Μενοιτίου ἄλκιμον υἱὸν / Ἕκτωρ Πριαμίδης σχεδὸν ἔγχεϊ θυμὸν ἀπηύρα (*Il.* 16.827-828), 'So Hektor, the son of Priam, nearby with a spear stripped the life from the strong son of Menoitios who had killed many'. After the death of Patroklos, Menelaos debates aloud among the Greeks as to the best course of action, and says that it is necessary to decide upon a plan not only to recover the dead body, but, as he says, καὶ αὐτοὶ / Τρώων ἐξ ἐνοπῆς θάνατον καὶ κῆρα φύγωμεν (*Il.* 17.713-714), 'so that we ourselves / may also escape death and destruction from the war-crying Trojans'.

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[23] Fenik 1968 pp. 164-165.

[24] The actual description of his death is very much biological in focus. Death at the hands of Meriones is also the fate of Harpalion, after he attempts to hide in a crowd (*Il.* 13.648). Likewise, Patroklos' attempt to flee death among the ranks of his companions is a failure, as he is slaughtered by Hektor immediately afterwards as we hear in *Il.* 16. 816-822. Lykaon, son of Priam, takes the position of suppliant at the knees of Achilles, περὶ δ' ἤθελε θυμῷ / ἐκφυγέειν θάνατόν τε κακὸν καὶ κῆρα μέλαιναν (*Il.* 21.65-66), 'he wished in his spirit / to escape death and black violent death', although his plea for mercy is in vain. Κήρ may be the typical word the poet chooses to express the death one attempts to avoid, but not all such attempts are necessarily successful. Nonetheless, sometimes there is, in the attempt to flee death, at least a temporary reprieve for the hero. We hear, for example, πῶς δέ κεν Ἕκτωρ κῆρας ὑπεξέφυγεν θανάτοιο, / εἰ μή οἱ πύματόν τε καὶ ὕστατον ἤντετ' Ἀπόλλων / ἐγγύθεν, ὅς οἱ ἐπῶρσε μένος λαιψηρά τε γοῦνα; (*Il.* 22.202-204), 'How then could Hektor have escaped from death, / had not Apollo this last and final time lingered by him / close, he who stirs up strength and light knees?'. Apollo aids Hektor by giving him strength, and Hektor thereby does escape death for the time being, although he is to die shortly. DeJong 1989 comments on this passage, remarking that it is a special case as far as 'near death' scenes go, because "The *if not*-situation has the form of a rhetorical question, which amounts to: Hector would never have escaped death for so long, if Apollo had not helped him for the last time. The *if not*-situation reflects and answers a question which must have arisen with the NeFe$_1$ after 201, viz. how was it possible that Achilles, famous for the speed of his feet, could not overtake Hector, to whom never any special ability to run quickly had been attributed?" (p. 71)

More often than not, κήρ is averted, if only temporarily. Although exceptions certainly do exist. However, they constitute but four cases out of the many in which the hero successfully avoids death by hiding among his men or dodging a blow).

On consideration of the word θάνατος as it appears within the poem, the first readily apparent fact worth noting is that this particular death word, more so than any of the others treated up to this point, tends not to be used independently. That is not, of course, to imply that it is never used on its own, but more often than not θάνατος is mentioned by the poet in conjunction with other words for death. Since this is the case, many of the passages in which θάνατος appears have already been cited in sections dealing with the other death words, and these passages will not be cited again at this time.

In this section, only passages in which θάνατος is used more or less independently will be given mention.

In book 1 we find Achilles speaking among the Greeks, urging a withdrawal from Trojan shores saying νῦν ἄμμε παλιμπλαγχθέντας ὀΐω / ἂψ ἀπονοστήσειν, εἴ κεν θάνατόν γε φύγοιμεν, / εἰ δὴ ὁμοῦ πόλεμός τε δαμᾷ καὶ λοιμὸς Ἀχαιούς (*Il.* 1.59-61), 'I suppose now, wandering back, / we must return home, if we can even escape death, / if battle, if indeed fighting and plague alike subdue the Achaians'. It would not be at all incongruous with the poet's practice to have used κήρ in this passage, since it is so very often the death word found in conjunction with words of escape, although meter here requires θάνατος instead. As is most often the case in the naming of death, there is no immediate threat to anyone's life within these lines.

In the next book, after Agamemnon addresses the crowd, the Greeks retire to their tents where ἄλλος δ' ἄλλῳ ἔρεζε θεῶν αἰειγενετάων / εὐχόμενος θάνατόν τε φυγεῖν καὶ μῶλον Ἄρηος (*Il.* 2.400-401), 'each man sacrificed to one of the gods who always are / praying to escape death and the struggle of Ares'. Again, θάνατος appears with the verb φεύγω, and again, it is named as some remote possibility.

Helen says to Priam ὡς ὄφελεν θάνατός μοι ἁδεῖν κακὸς ὁππότε δεῦρο / υἱέϊ σῷ ἑπόμην (*Il.* 3.173-174), 'Would that wretched death were pleasing to me when / I followed your son here'. Of course, although she might *wish* that death had claimed her before she had come to Troy, it did not. Helen names a death that is in no way a reality, as does Priam in his turn. In book 3, Priam announces his intention to return to his home, since he cannot bear to watch the one on one combat planned between his son Paris and Menelaos, saying:

> ἤτοι ἐγὼν εἶμι προτὶ Ἴλιον ἠνεμόεσσαν
> ἄψ, ἐπεὶ οὔ πω τλήσομ' ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ὁρᾶσθαι
> μαρνάμενον φίλον υἱὸν ἀρηϊφίλῳ Μενελάῳ·

> Ζεὺς μέν που τό γε οἶδε καὶ ἀθάνατοι θεοὶ ἄλλοι
> ὁπποτέρῳ θανάτοιο τέλος πεπρωμένον ἐστίν. (*Il.* 3. 305-309)
>
> Verily I will go back to windy Ilion,
> since I will not dare to see with my eyes
> my dear son contending with war-loving Menelaos.
> Perhaps Zeus knows, and the other immortal gods,
> for which of the two the end of death is fated.

Of course, the death that Priam names does not come to pass at all, owing to the intervention of Aphrodite on behalf of her favourite mortal, Paris. Priam does not know that the death will not occur, but the narrator who allows Priam to speak does. This makes all the difference, and this is a good example of the narrator's and the focalizer's points of view not being completely sequestered.

Agamemnon names death to Menelaos when the latter is wounded by an arrow, saying φίλε κασίγνητε θάνατόν νύ τοι ὅρκι᾽ ἔταμνον / οἶον προστήσας πρὸ Ἀχαιῶν Τρωσὶ μάχεσθαι (*Il.* 4.155-156), 'Dear brother, it was your death I ratified with oaths just now / having set you alone in front of the Achaians to fight against the Trojans'. Menelaos is not, however, fatally wounded, and will even go on to survive the war and achieve his homecoming (as we are told in the *Odyssey*). These lines again reflect a crossing of boundaries between character and narrator perspectives.

Idomeneus, lord of the Cretans, says to Agamemnon concerning the Trojans:

> ἀλλ᾽ ἄλλους ὄτρυνε κάρη κομόωντας Ἀχαιοὺς
> ὄφρα τάχιστα μαχώμεθ᾽, ἐπεὶ σύν γ᾽ ὅρκι᾽ ἔχευαν
> Τρῶες· τοῖσιν δ᾽ αὖ θάνατος καὶ κήδε᾽ ὀπίσσω
> ἔσσετ᾽ ἐπεὶ πρότεροι ὑπὲρ ὅρκια δηλήσαντο. (*Il.* 4.268-271)
>
> But rouse the other Achaians with flowing hair
> so that we might fight quickly, since the Trojans have confounded their promises.
> Death and sorrows it will be for them hereafter,
> since they first destroyed the oaths.

Idomeneus names a death that will be the price of Trojan treachery at some time in the indeterminate future.

Achilles discusses the two fates which his mother, Thetis, has told him are his for the choosing, and says of the second εἰ δέ κεν οἴκαδ' ἵκωμι φίλην ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν, / ὤλετό μοι κλέος ἐσθλόν, ἐπὶ δηρὸν δέ μοι αἰὼν / ἔσσεται, οὐδέ κέ μ' ὦκα τέλος θανάτοιο κιχείη (*Il.* 9.414-416), 'But if I go homeward to my dear fatherland, / the goodly glory for me is lost, but my life will be long, / nor will the end of death meet with me quickly'. In this passage, Achilles is speaking about one of two possible deaths. Neither is an absolute until one is chosen, and neither is immediately at hand. In fact, in naming the death he will obtain in old age if he leaves Troy, he is naming the very death that will not occur, since he eventually chooses the first of his fates.

In urging Achilles to be appeased by Agamemnon's gifts and return to the fighting, the aged Phoinix eventually relates the story of Meleagros and his mother Althaia, telling how the mother:

> πόλλ' ἀχέουσ' ἠρᾶτο κασιγνήτοιο φόνοιο,
> πολλὰ δὲ καὶ γαῖαν πολυφόρβην χερσὶν ἀλοία
> κικλήσκουσ' Ἀΐδην καὶ ἐπαινὴν Περσεφόνειαν
> πρόχνυ καθεζομένη, δεύοντο δὲ δάκρυσι κόλποι,
> παιδὶ δόμεν θάνατον· (*Il.* 9.567-571)
>
> Grieving greatly for the murder of her brother, she prayed,
> and many times she beat the bountiful earth with her hands
> calling on Hades and dread Persephone,
> resting on her knees, her breasts wet with tears,
> (she prayed for them) to give death to her son.

This type of mention of death is not at all unusual in the poem. Deaths that have already occurred (especially far in the mythic past) are as remote and non-threatening as deaths in the unspecified future. Moreover, Althaia's actions indicate a wish (almost optative in sense, if not form), and do not describe the reality of the moment (either in her time or in Phoinix's time).

In book 10 Diomedes and Odysseus capture the Trojan Dolon, and assure him of his safety at their hands, providing he supply information concerning the state of affairs in the enemy camp. Odysseus wins his trust with the words θάρσει, μηδέ τί τοι θάνατος καταθύμιος ἔστω (*Il.* 10.383), 'be bold, nor let death be upon your spirit'. Of course, death may be named here, for Odysseus is attempting to make Dolon believe that it is at a safe distance, and is removed from the immediate situation. Certainly, Dolon does survive for the next seventy-one lines (long enough to impart all pertinent information), although his death following his act of betrayal against the Trojans is swift. When Diomedes actually dispatches him, death is not named, although Diomedes' words do ring with a grim echo of Odysseus' own (consider μὴ δή μοι φύξιν γε, Δόλων, ἐμβάλλεο θυμῷ in *Il.* 10.447, 'Do not indeed, for me, Dolon, cast flight into your heart').

Diomedes does, however, name death in his encounter with Hektor (of course, it is a death which does not happen, as Hektor is fated to be killed by Achilles, and again, although the character speaking is unaware of the outcome of events, the narrator is not). After aiming a spear at Hektor's head, only to see it deflected by his helmet, Diomedes rages ἐξ αὖ νῦν ἔφυγες θάνατον κύον· ἦ τέ τοι ἄγχι / ἦλθε κακόν· νῦν αὖτέ σ' ἐρύσατο Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων / ᾧ μέλλεις εὔχεσθαι ἰὼν ἐς δοῦπον ἀκόντων (*Il.* 11.362-364), 'Now again you have fled from death, dog, / and yet the evil came near to you. But now again Phoibos Apollo has guarded you, / he to whom you intend to pray, going into the din of spears'.

In book 14, it is said of Aphrodite that Λῆμνον δ' εἰσαφίκανε πόλιν θείοιο Θόαντος. / ἔνθ' Ὕπνῳ ξύμβλητο κασιγνήτῳ Θανάτοιο (*Il.* 14.230-231), 'She came to Lemnos, the city of godlike Thoas. / There she met with Sleep, brother of Death', and it hardly needs pointing out that death poses no threat to anyone in this passage. Death is mentioned as the brother of Sleep at a number of points throughout the poem, and in such contexts acquires a somewhat gentler aspect than the one from which mortals typically flee in dread.[25]

Hektor, rallying his troops to pursue the confused and panicked Achaians as they flee, cries:

> νηυσὶν ἐπισσεύσθαι, ἐᾶν δ' ἔναρα βροτόεντα·
> ὃν δ' ἂν ἐγὼν ἀπάνευθε νεῶν ἑτέρωθι νοήσω,
> αὐτοῦ οἱ θάνατον μητίσομαι, οὐδέ νυ τόν γε
> γνωτοί τε γνωταί τε πυρὸς λελάχωσι θανόντα,
> ἀλλὰ κύνες ἐρύουσι πρὸ ἄστεος ἡμετέροιο. (*Il.* 15.347-351)
>
> Make haste for the ships, let the bloody spoils be.

---

[25] We also find Death personified and linked to his brother, Sleep, in the passage wherein Sarpedon is allowed to die. We hear the words of Hera to Zeus on the subject,

> ἀλλ' εἴ τοι φίλος ἐστί, τεὸν δ' ὀλοφύρεται ἦτορ,
> ἤτοι μέν μιν ἔασον ἐνὶ κρατερῇ ὑσμίνῃ
> χέρσ' ὕπο Πατρόκλοιο Μενοιτιάδαο δαμῆναι·
> αὐτὰρ ἐπὴν δὴ τόν γε λίπῃ ψυχή τε καὶ αἰών,
> πέμπειν μιν θάνατόν τε φέρειν καὶ νήδυμον ὕπνον
> εἰς ὅ κε δὴ Λυκίης εὐρείης δῆμον ἵκωνται,
> ἔνθά ἑ ταρχύσουσι κασίγνητοί τε ἔται τε
> τύμβῳ τε στήλῃ τε· τὸ γὰρ γέρας ἐστὶ θανόντων. (*Il.* 16.450-457)
>
> But if he is dear to you and your heart pities him,
> indeed, leave him to be subdued in powerful combat
> under the hands of Patroklos, son of Menoitios,
> but when the life and lifetime depart,
> send Death to carry him off, and sweet Sleep,
> until they come to the people of broad Lykia,
> and there his brothers and kinsmen will perform funeral rites
> with a tomb and a monument stone, for this is the honour of the dead.

Later, after his son has died, Zeus beseeches Apollo to care for the body and see to it that it is delivered up to Sleep and Death for removal to the place of burial. He says:

> πέμπε δέ μιν πομποῖσιν ἅμα κραιπνοῖσι φέρεσθαι
> ὕπνῳ καὶ θανάτῳ διδυμάοσιν, οἵ ῥά μιν ὦκα
> θήσουσ' ἐν Λυκίης εὐρείης πίονι δήμῳ,
> ἔνθά ἑ ταρχύσουσι κασίγνητοί τε ἔται τε
> τύμβῳ τε στήλῃ τε·τὸ γὰρ γέρας ἐστὶ θανόντων. (*Il.* 16.671-675)
>
> Send him to be carried by the swift messengers of
> Sleep and Death, the twins, and easily they will quickly
> set him down among the rich folk of wide Lykia,
> and there his brothers and kinsmen will perform funeral rites
> with a tomb and a memorial stone, for this is the honour of the dead.

In *Il.* 16.676-683 we are told that Apollo carries out this duty according to Zeus' request.

> The man whom I notice on the other side apart from the ships,
> I will contrive his death for him, nor will his
> male and female relatives grant him, once dead, the funeral pyre,
> but dogs will drag him off in front of our city.

Nonetheless, it is not entirely clear from the text which man Hektor sees and intends to kill, nor if he accomplishes his goal. Presented instead is only a grim foreshadowing of the disrespect that will be paid to Hektor's own corpse, before the next several lines take the audience on a sweeping survey of the tumult of the rushing Achaians, and the role of Apollo in the confusion.

Death is named again in this same book, in a simile likening Hektor's approach against the Achaians to that of a mighty wave against a ship, on account of which ...τρομέουσι δέ τε φρένα ναῦται, / δειδιότες· τυτθὸν γὰρ ὑπ' ἐκ θανάτοιο φέρονται (*Il.* 15.627-628), 'The wits of the sailors tremble / as they fear, for they are carried only a little beyond (the reach of) death'. It is the wave of the simile which actually bears θάνατος to the men of the ship, and although the wave is compared to Hektor himself, he is not *directly* described by the poet as the bearer of θάνατος. Moreover, he is not at this moment in the narrative depriving any man of life.

Speaking to Patroklos, Achilles muses in anger that he wishes the two of them alone could survive the war. He says μήτέ τις οὖν Τρώων θάνατον φύγοι ὅσσοι ἔασι, / μήτέ τις Ἀργείων, νῶϊν δ' ἐκδῦμεν ὄλεθρον, / ὄφρ' οἶοι Τροίης ἱερὰ κρήδεμνα λύωμεν (*Il.* 16.98-100), 'Therefore if only no one of the Trojans could flee death, however many there are, / nor anyone of the Argives, but we two escape destruction, / so that we alone could loose the holy walls of Troy'. This naming of death, as in so many other examples, is the naming of a death not present, and one which is not even destined to become a reality. Needless to say, all Trojans won't be killed (even if very few survive), and certainly all Argives will not. Ironically, it is Patroklos himself who is destined to die before the end of the poem.

In this same book, Zeus looks on as Patroklos prepares to kill Sarpedon, and he contemplates intervening so that his beloved son might be saved. In *Il.* 16.440-442, he ponders this and Hera speaks to him in amazement. The appearance of θάνατος in this passage is interesting. Although Sarpedon will indeed be allowed to die according to his destiny, it is not certain at the time when Hera names θάνατος, whether Zeus will let what is destined be, or if he will alter it.

The narrator steps away from the detached third person narrative for a moment in book 16 to address Patroklos directly, heightening the pathos of his approaching death. We hear the question Ἔνθα τίνα πρῶτον τίνα δ' ὕστατον ἐξενάριξας / Πατρόκλεις, ὅτε δή σε θεοὶ θάνατον δὲ κάλεσσαν; (*Il.* 16.692-693), 'Then whom did you slay first, and whom last, / Patroklos, when the gods called you to your death?'. Death will be visited upon Patroklos, and that death is named, but as is typical, will not occur for many lines to come.

Hektor, in turn, has death named for him, although his death will not happen at this point of the poem. Zeus, watching Hektor adorn himself in the armor he has stripped from the body of Patroklos, comments:

> ἆ δείλ' οὐδέ τί τοι θάνατος καταθύμιός ἐστιν
> ὃς δή τοι σχεδὸν εἶσι· σὺ δ' ἄμβροτα τεύχεα δύνεις
> ἀνδρὸς ἀριστῆος, τόν τε τρομέουσι καὶ ἄλλοι·
> τοῦ δὴ ἑταῖρον ἔπεφνες ἐνηέα τε κρατερόν τε,
> τεύχεα δ' οὐ κατὰ κόσμον ἀπὸ κρατός τε καὶ ὤμων
> εἵλευ· (*Il.* 17.201-206)
>
> Ah wretch, death is not upon your spirit in any way,
> that which indeed comes near to you, but you put on the immortal armour of an excellent man, at whom others tremble.
> Indeed you have slain his companion both kind hearted and mighty,
> and contrary to what is comely, from his head and shoulders
> you have seized the armour.

Zeus goes on to say, however, that the time for death is not at hand, and that he himself will bestow upon Hektor renewed strength for the time being.

Thrasymedes and Antilochos are described as making their way among the ranks of Greeks, and we hear of them that τὼ δ' ἐπιοσσομένω θάνατον καὶ φύζαν ἑταίρων / νόσφιν ἐμαρνάσθην (*Il.* 17.381-382), 'But those two, having the death and flight of their companions before their eyes, / both contended separately'. They watch for death, but there is no specific fatality being singled out by the poet for mention at this point, nor are they aware (as the lines preceding these mention) that Patroklos has recently fallen.

In book 18 Hephaistos attempts to console Thetis, who is lamenting her son even before his death (a point which underlines the extent to which death is viewed as a process). Hephaistos says αἲ γάρ μιν θανάτοιο δυσηχέος ὧδε δυναίμην / νόσφιν ἀποκρύψαι, ὅτε μιν μόρος αἰνὸς ἱκάνοι (*Il.* 18. 464-465), 'Would that I could hide him apart from ill-sounding death / when his dread fate (μόρος being a variation on μοῖρα) arrives upon him'. Of course, he can't hide Achilles from death (although Zeus may have such an option when he wishes), but the death being discussed is not at this time coming to pass, and moreover, it is an immortal who mentions it.

When Achilles finally accepts Briseis back from Agamemnon, he postulates that it was Zeus who caused him to become so angry at the outrage done to him to begin with, because ἤθελ' Ἀχαιοῖσιν θάνατον πολέεσσι γενέσθαι (*Il.* 19.274), 'He wished that there would be a death for many Achaians'. These are deaths which have by now already occurred and pose no current threat. Likewise, Achilles names death that exists in the future saying, Ξάνθε τί μοι θάνατον μαντεύεαι; οὐδέ τί σε χρή. / εὖ νυ τὸ οἶδα καὶ αὐτὸς ὅ μοι μόρος ἐνθάδ' ὀλέσθαι / νόσφι φίλου πατρὸς καὶ μητέρος· (*Il.* 19.420-422), 'Xanthos, why do you declare my death? It is not necessary for you / I myself know well that it is my fate (again, μόρος being used instead of μοῖρα) to perish here / apart from my dear father and mother'. Achilles scolds Xanthos in this passage for reminding him of an unpleasant fact, but since the matter has been brought before his mind's eye already, there is no further harm in naming it.

Poseidon, knowing well that Aeneas is fated to survive the fall of Troy, suggests immortal intervention in the conflict waging between him and Achilles, saying:

ἀλλ' ἄγεθ' ἡμεῖς πέρ μιν ὑπὲκ θανάτου ἀγάγωμεν,
μή πως καὶ Κρονίδης κεχολώσεται, αἴ κεν Ἀχιλλεὺς
τόνδε κατακτείνῃ· μόριμον δέ οἵ ἐστ' ἀλέασθαι,
ὄφρα μὴ ἄσπερμος γενεὴ καὶ ἄφαντος ὄληται
Δαρδάνου, ὃν Κρονίδης περὶ πάντων φίλατο παίδων, (*Il.* 20. 300-305)

But come, let us lead him away from death,
lest somehow the son of Kronos becomes angry, if the Achaians
should kill this man. It is fated for him to escape,
so that seedless and forgotten the family
of Dardanos not perish, (Dardanos) whom the son of Kronos loved before all his children.

It has already been noted that immortals name death with impunity. Moreover, the death in question here is one that will not take place any time soon.

Achilles grows frustrated when his initial attempts to kill Hektor are proven vain. He says ἐξ αὖ νῦν ἔφυγες θάνατον κύον· ἦ τέ τοι ἄγχι / ἦλθε κακόν (*Il.* 20.449-450), as does Diomedes in *Il.* 11.362-363 (for translation see page 122). Achilles will, of course, get his chance and strip the life from Hektor, but not yet.

Achilles, having rejoined the war, knows he is to die soon himself. Caught in a river current, he laments:

ὥς μ' ὄφελ' Ἕκτωρ κτεῖναι ὃς ἐνθάδε γ' ἔτραφ' ἄριστος·
τώ κ' ἀγαθὸς μὲν ἔπεφν', ἀγαθὸν δέ κεν ἐξενάριξε·
νῦν δέ με λευγαλέῳ θανάτῳ εἵμαρτο ἁλῶναι
ἐρχθέντ' ἐν μεγάλῳ ποταμῷ ὡς παῖδα συφορβόν,
ὅν ῥά τ' ἔναυλος ἀποέρσῃ χειμῶνι περῶντα (*Il.* 21.279-283).

Would that Hektor had killed me, he who is the greatest man reared here,Thus a noble man would have killed, and he would have slain a noble man. But now it is fated that I be taken by grim death,being dragged off in a mighty river, like a swineherd boy, whom the torrent easily sweeps away in as storm as he crosses

His lament is unnecessary. Poseidon and Athena immediately appear before him, and offer assurances that his death will not be an inglorious one. The death that Achilles has named is not the death that will befall him.

In book 22, Achilles finally kills Hektor, but this act seems to be (owing to the narrative skill employed) anything but a foregone conclusion. The gods watch Hektor's flight and Achilles' pursuit, and debate among themselves, saying ἠέ μιν ἐκ θανάτοιο σαώσομεν, ἦέ μιν ἤδη / Πηλεΐδῃ Ἀχιλῆϊ δαμάσσομεν ἐσθλὸν ἐόντα (*Il.* 22.175-176), 'Should we immediately save him from death / or subdue him, although a noble man, by means of Achilles, son of Peleus?' Immortals may name death safely, and moreover the death they name is not yet a certainty, (indeed even when it is decided upon, it does not take place until line 361). Along these same lines, in the course of this debate, Athena asks Zeus ἄνδρα θνητὸν ἐόντα πάλαι πεπρωμένον αἴσῃ / ἂψ ἐθέλεις θανάτοιο δυσηχέος ἐξαναλῦσαι (*Il.* 22.179-180), as did Hera in *Il.* 16 441-442 (for translation see page 98).

Hektor himself realizes which decision the gods have reached when he turns to his brother Deïphobos for another weapon, only to find him vanished. At this point, Hektor knows that the image of his brother which he saw only moments before was an illusion sent by Athena, and that he is in fact alone and without resources, facing Achilles. Knowing his time is close at hand, he says:

> ὢ πόποι ἦ μάλα δή με θεοὶ θάνατον δὲ κάλεσσαν·
> Δηΐφοβον γὰρ ἔγωγ' ἐφάμην ἥρωα παρεῖναι·
> ἀλλ' ὃ μὲν ἐν τείχει, ἐμὲ δ' ἐξαπάτησεν Ἀθήνη.
> νῦν δὲ δὴ ἐγγύθι μοι θάνατος κακός, οὐδ' ἔτ' ἄνευθεν,
> οὐδ' ἀλέη· (*Il.* 22.297-301)
>
> Alas, now in very truth the gods have called me to death,
> for I believed the hero Deïphobos was with me,
> but he is on the wall, and Athena deceived me.
> But now evil death is near to me, no longer far off,
> and there is no flight.

However, Hektor still has enough time left to him to react intellectually to his approaching end (as mentioned before, he doesn't die until line 361), and he says to himself μὴ μὰν ἀσπουδί γε καὶ ἀκλειῶς ἀπολοίμην, / ἀλλὰ μέγα ῥέξας τι καὶ ἐσσομένοισι πυθέσθαι (*Il.* 22.304-305), 'But let me not perish ingloriously without a struggle, / but accomplishing something great, that men to come know of it'.

In book 24, Zeus wishes to provide Priam with a safe convoy through the Greek camp, so that he may come to the tent of Achilles and offer ransom for the body of Hektor. He calls on Hermes for assistance, and tells him μὴ δέ τί οἱ θάνατος μελέτω φρεσὶ μὴ δέ τι τάρβος· (*Il.* 24.152), 'Let death not be a concern to him in his breast in any way', words which Hermes reiterates when he comes face to face with Priam (μὴ δέ τί τοι θάνατος μελέτω φρεσὶ μηδέ τι τάρβος· in *Il.* 24.181, see above for translation). Priam will be kept safe because of divine concern for him, and hence, when both gods use the word θάνατος, it is only to give the assurance that it poses no threat. Despite this, however, Priam's kinsmen follow as they see him drive away in his cart, πόλλ' ὀλοφυρόμενοι ὡς εἰ θάνατον δὲ κιόντα (*Il.* 24.328), 'lamenting much, as if he were going to his death', which, of course, he is not.

There is but one instance in the whole poem in which τέλος, on its own, is used to signify death. We find this passage in book 11, wherein Sokos attempts to stab at the vitals of Odysseus, and Pallas Athena intervenes to make sure the wound is not fatal. We are told that γνῶ δ' 'Οδυσεὺς ὅ οἱ οὔ τι τέλος κατακαίριον ἦλθεν (*Il.* 11.439), 'But Odysseus knew that the deadly end had not in any way come for him'. In this line alone does τέλος appear as a death word without the usual θανάτοιο, although it is modified by the adjective κατακαίριον (deadly), making its meaning in this context clear. As is usual, this naming of death takes place at a point in the poem in which the hero knows that his death is not about to be fulfilled. B. Fenik has remarked that "Athena's help here is a typical feature. Poseidon protects Antilochos in the same way in N 554 and 562...the isolation and wounding of Odysseus are, therefore, almost entirely typical, both in pattern and detail. The end of the scene, where Odysseus is taken out of the fight by chariot, is equally typical, especially for Λ."[26]

There are some conspicuous exceptions to the general practice on the part of the poet of naming only the death which does not immediately threaten that must be addressed. These atypical passages will be cited here, and will be followed by a brief discussion on the problems they pose.

The exceptions to the poet's general practice with respect to μοῖρα are as follows. In book 5:

> τὸν μὲν ἄρ' Εὐρύπυλος, Εὐαίμονος ἀγλαὸς υἱός,
> πρόσθεν ἕθεν φεύγοντα μεταδρομάδην ἔλασ' ὦμον
> φασγάνῳ ἀΐξας, ἀπὸ δ' ἔξεσε χεῖρα βαρεῖαν·
> αἱματόεσσα δὲ χεὶρ πεδίῳ πέσε· τὸν δὲ κατ' ὄσσε
> ἔλλαβε πορφύρεος θάνατος καὶ μοῖρα κραταιή. (*Il.* 5.79-83)
>
> Then Eurypylos, the glorious son of Euaimon,
> following closely struck the shoulder of him fleeing before,
> darting with a sword, and he cut away the arm's weight,
> and the arm fell bleeding to the ground, and the dark
> red death and mighty fate took hold of his eyes.

On the context of this passage, Fenik writes:

> This (lines 37-84) is the second part of the large pattern. It consists of six individual encounters in which six Trojans are slain. The section as a whole has certain striking features:
> 1. The Trojans are all in flights, so that each Greek slays an enemy who is fleeing. This also happens in related passages Ξ 511 and Ο 328.
> 2. The six slayings fall into two groups of three each. In the first, three major Greek warriors appear: Agamemnon, Idomeneus, and Menelaos. In the second, fighters of a distinctly second rank are involved: Meriones, Meges, and Eurypylos.

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[26] Fenik 1968 p. 104.

3. These two groups are also distinguished by the way they slay their opponents. The first three slayings are quick and simple; the second three are brutal and grisly. W. Friedrich has pointed out that this latter type of slaying is associated most of the time with warriors of the second rank.[27]

To continue, in book 16, the narrator tells us:

Αἴας δὲ Κλεόβουλον Ὀϊλιάδης ἐπορούσας
ζωὸν ἕλε βλαφθέντα κατὰ κλόνον· ἀλλά οἱ αὖθι
λῦσε μένος πλήξας ξίφει αὐχένα κωπήεντι.
πᾶν δ' ὑπεθερμάνθη ξίφος αἵματι· τὸν δὲ κατ' ὄσσε
ἔλλαβε πορφύρεος θάνατος καὶ μοῖρα κραταιή. (*Il.* 16. 330-334)

Aias, son of Oileus, rushing violently
caught Kleoboulos alive, hindered by the confusion, and there
he undid his strength, smiting his neck with the hilted sword.
And the entire sword grew hot with blood, and the dark
red death and mighty fate took hold of his eyes.

Also in the same book:

ἀλλά με μοῖρ' ὀλοὴ καὶ Λητοῦς ἔκτανεν υἱός,
ἀνδρῶν δ' Εὔφορβος· σὺ δέ με τρίτος ἐξεναρίζεις.
ἄλλο δέ τοι ἐρέω, σὺ δ' ἐνὶ φρεσὶ βάλλεο σῇσιν·
οὔ θην οὐδ' αὐτὸς δηρὸν, ἀλλά τοι ἤδη
ἄγχι παρέστηκεν θάνατος καὶ μοῖρα κραταιὴ,
χερσὶ δαμέντ' Ἀχιλῆος ἀμύμονος Αἰακίδαο."
        Ὣς ἄρα μιν εἰπόντα τέλος θανάτοιο κάλυψε·
(*Il.* 16. 849-855)

But deadly fate killed me, and the son of Leto,
and of men, Euphorbos, but you slay me third.
And I will speak another thing to you, and do you cast it into your heart;
Surely you yourself will not go on too long, but already
death and mighty fate stand near,
as you are subdued at the hands of Aiakos' great son Achilles."
        Then as he was speaking thus, the end of death covered him over.

Finally, in book 20:

...ὁ͂ δ' Ἀγήνορος υἱὸν Ἔχεκλον

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[27] Ibid., pp. 14-15.

μέσσην κὰκ κεφαλὴν ξίφει ἤλασε κωπήεντι,
πᾶν δ' ὑπεθερμάνθη ξίφος αἵματι· τὸν δὲ κατ' ὄσσε
ἔλλαβε πορφύρεος θάνατος καὶ μοῖρα κραταιή. (*Il.* 20. 474-477)

...but he struck Echeklos, son of Agenor
on the middle of his head with a hilted sword,
and the whole sword shone with blood, and the dark red
death and mighty fate took hold of his eyes.

Of all of these exceptions, only one passage (*Il.* 16.849-855) does not name death twice in hendiadys.

It is πότμος which we find used in one of the most interesting lines concerning death in the entire epic. Of Patroklos at his death we hear ψυχὴ δ' ἐκ ῥεθέων πταμένη Ἄϊδόσδε βεβήκει, / ὃν πότμον γοόωσα, λιποῦσ' ἀνδροτῆτα καὶ ἥβην (*Il.* 16.856-857), 'The soul went down to Hades, flying from the limbs, / lamenting its destiny, it left manhood and youth behind', words which are repeated exactly at the death of Hektor in book 22, lines 362-363. The πότμος which is being lamented is none other than death, obviously, as both men have just died and their shades have separated from their bodies in order to make their way to the underworld (the ψυχή is seldom mentioned unless one is dead or unconscious). In these two remarkably poignant cases, πότμος is a death-related term, and death is therefore, for all practical purposes, named. These deaths appear named at the very moment when they occur, when the lives of Patroklos and Hektor are terminated, and in this respect, they are exceptions rather than the rule.

Two other exceptions to the standard pattern concerning πότμος may also be noted. In book 4 we hear Τυδεὺς μὲν καὶ τοῖσιν ἀεικέα πότμον ἐφῆκε· πάντας ἔπεφν' (*Il.* 4.396-397), 'And on these men Tydeus let loose a shameful destiny, / and he slaughtered them all'. Πότμος is clearly death, and it is named in the telling of its occurrence. A similar usage appears in book 11, wherein we find ἔνθ' 'Αντήνορος υἷες ὑπ' 'Ατρεΐδῃ βασιλῆϊ, πότμον ἀναπλήσαντες ἔδυν δόμον Ἄϊδος εἴσω (*Il.* 11.262-263), 'There under the king, son of Atreus, the sons of Antenor / having filled out their destiny went down to Hades' home'.

There are also cases in which κήρ does, contrary to the poet's usual practice, appear in scenes wherein the process of death terminates life.

Yet there are only two instances in which the word appears in the text at the same moment death arrives, (the above mentioned failed attempts to avoid κήρ by dodging a blow or hiding in a crowd notwithstanding). In book 2, (in a line which may refer either to Chromis or Ennomos) ἀλλ' οὐκ οἰωνοῖσιν ἐρύσατο κῆρα μέλαιναν, / ἀλλ' ἐδάμη ὑπὸ χερσὶ ποδώκεος Αἰακίδαο / ἐν ποταμῷ, ὅθι περ Τρῶας κεράϊζε καὶ ἄλλους (*Il.* 2.859-861), 'but he did not ward off black violent death with birds (of prophesy), / but he was subdued under the hands of swift footed Aiakides / in the river, where he (Aiakides) killed other Trojans also'. Finally, in book 18, we find one of the most remarkable references to κήρ in the entire poem. In this passage, κήρ is not only present at the moment the warrior dies, but it is actually personified and depicted as claiming and dragging away three men, one dead, one wounded (but still alive), and one as yet unmarked by battle (demonstrating that κήρ is a force which may visit at any moment, even when one appears healthy and strong). This personification is unusual to the poem, appearing in a poetic description of a scene on the shield of Achilles, which is a poetic construct of an artistic construct of a cultural construct[28] :

> ἐν δ' Ἔρις ἐν δὲ Κυδοιμὸς ὁμίλεον, ἐν δ' ὀλοὴ Κήρ,
> ἄλλον ζωὸν ἔχουσα νεούτατον, ἄλλον ἄουτον,
> ἄλλον τεθνηῶτα κατὰ μόθον ἕλκε ποδοῖιν·
> εἷμα δ' ἔχ' ἀμφ' ὤμοισι δαφοινεὸν αἵματι φωτῶν. (*Il.* 18.535-538)

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[28] DeJong 1989 remarks (p. 145) that ὀλοὴ Κήρ here is clearly destructive in an active sense (as is fire), not to be confused with the ὀλοιὴ μοῖρα of Hektor in *Il.* 10.5, which is 'baneful' and 'unfortunate'. On p. 116. it is noted that the prayers are summarized because the speaking characters are not deemed important enough to quote directly.

> And among them was Strife and thronging Confusion and destructive Violent Death,
> holding one man alive, recently wounded, another uninjured,
> another dead, and she dragged them by their two feet through the battle.
> She held garments about her shoulders red with the blood of mortals.

Θάνατος too appears in the occasional death scene. Of Phereklos' death at the hands of Meriones we hear τὸν μὲν Μηριόνης ὅτε δὴ κατέμαρπτε διώκων / βεβλήκει γλουτὸν κατὰ δεξιόν· ἣ δὲ διαπρὸ / ἀντικρὺ κατὰ κύστιν ὑπ' ὀστέον ἤλυθ' ἀκωκή· / γνὺξ δ' ἔριπ' οἰμώξας, θάνατος δέ μιν ἀμφεκάλυψε (*Il.* 5.65-68), 'Meriones, pursuing him caught him / and struck the buttock on the right side, / and the point went straight on, right under the bone and into the bladder, / and he fell crying on his knees, and death closed about him' (for Fenik's remarks on this passage, see page 112 of this chapter). Aeneas kills Orsilochos and Krethon, and we are told that τὼ δ' αὖθι τέλος θανάτοιο κάλυψεν (*Il.* 5.553), "Now the end of death covered them both'. Odysseus kills Sokos, and says over the body:

> ὦ Σῶχ' Ἱππάσου υἱὲ δαΐφρονος ἱπποδάμοιο
> φθῆ σε τέλος θανάτοιο κιχήμενον, οὐδ' ὑπάλυξας.
> ἆ δείλ' οὐ μὲν σοί γε πατὴρ καὶ πότνια μήτηρ
> ὄσσε καθαιρήσουσι θανόντι περ, ἀλλ' οἰωνοὶ
> ὠμησταὶ ἐρύουσι, περὶ πτερὰ πυκνὰ βαλόντες. (*Il.* 11.450-454)
>
> Sokos, son of prudent Hippasos, breaker of horses,
> the end of death overtook you, meeting with it, and you did not escape.
> Wretch, your father and queenly mother
> will not close your eyes for you, although you are dead,
> but the flesh eating birds will carry you off, casting about their dense wings.

Aeneas kills Aphareus, and we are told:

> ἔνθ' Αἰνέας Ἀφαρῆα Καλητορίδην ἐπορούσας
> λαιμὸν τύψ' ἐπὶ οἷ τετραμμένον ὀξέϊ δουρί·
> ἐκλίνθη δ' ἑτέρωσε κάρη, ἐπὶ δ' ἀσπὶς ἑάφθη
> καὶ κόρυς, ἀμφὶ δέ οἱ θάνατος χύτο θυμοραϊστής (*Il.* 13.541-544)
>
> Then Aeneas rushing at Aphareus, son of Kaletor,
> struck him with a sharp spear in the throat
> which had turned to it.

His head was bent to one side, and his shield and his helm
hung down, and about him death the spirit destroying was poured.

and when Idomeneus kills Erymas we hear:

'Ιδομενεὺς δ' 'Ερύμαντα κατὰ στόμα νηλέϊ χαλκῷ
νύξε· τὸ δ' ἀντικρὺ δόρυ χάλκεον ἐξεπέρησε
νέρθεν ὑπ' ἐγκεφάλοιο, κέασσε δ' ἄρ' ὀστέα λευκά·
ἐκ δ' ἐτίναχθεν ὀδόντες, ἐνέπλησθεν δέ οἱ ἄμφω
αἵματος ὀφθαλμοί· τὸ δ' ἀνὰ στόμα καὶ κατὰ ῥῖνας
πρῆσε χανών· θανάτου δὲ μέλαν νέφος ἀμφεκάλυψεν. (*Il.* 16.345-350)

Idomeneus struck Erymas in the mouth with the pitiless bronze,
and the bronze spear passed entirely through
under the brain from below, and the white bones shattered,
and the teeth were shaken out and both eyes
were filled with blood. And through his mouth and down his nostrils
it flowed as he gaped, and the dark cloud of death closed about him.

Meanwhile, Patroklos strikes at Erylaos, as we are told in the following:

αὐτὰρ ἔπειτ' Ἐρύλαον ἐπεσσύμενον βάλε πέτρῳ
μέσσην κὰκ κεφαλήν· ἣ δ' ἄνδιχα πᾶσα κεάσθη
ἐν κόρυθι βριαρῇ· ὃ δ' ἄρα πρηνὴς ἐπὶ γαίῃ
κάππεσεν, ἀμφὶ δέ μιν θάνατος χύτο θυμοραϊστής. (*Il.* 16.411-414)

But next he struck Erylaos rushing onward
with a stone in the middle of the head, and it (the head) was entirely shattered to pieces in the strong helmet, and he fell prone upon the ground,
and about him death the spirit destroying was poured.

Fenik says of this passage and the lines following it, "Patroklos continues his slaying by destroying Eryalos and then a whole series of victims. Stones are frequently used as weapons, and Eryalos' death is a combination of that of Epeigeis at Π 577 and Iphition at Υ 386. Such smaller details can be combined with almost infinite variation."[29]

Death is named in these subsequent passages as well. Patroklos goes on to kill Sarpedon in a passage which is composed almost entirely of familiar elements.[30] As Sarpedon lays dying,

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[29] Fenik 1968 p. 200.
[30] Ibid. p. 203

> Ὣς ἄρα μιν εἰπόντα τέλος θανάτοιο κάλυψεν
> ὀφθαλμοὺς ῥῖνάς θ᾽· ὃ δὲ λὰξ ἐν στήθεσι βαίνων
> ἐκ χροὸς ἕλκε δόρυ, προτὶ δὲ φρένες αὐτῷ ἕποντο·
> τοῖο δ᾽ ἅμα ψυχήν τε καὶ ἔγχεος ἐξέρυσ᾽ αἰχμήν. (*Il.* 16.502-505)
>
> Then as he was speaking thus, the end of death covered
> his eyes and nostrils, and he (Patroklos) stepping with his heel on his chest
> drew the spear from the flesh, and the midriff followed hard upon it.
> And he drew out the life along with the point of the spear.

Epeigeus is killed by Hektor while attempting to take a dead body, and we hear that:

> τόν ῥα τόθ᾽ ἁπτόμενον νέκυος βάλε φαίδιμος Ἕκτωρ
> χερμαδίῳ κεφαλήν· ἣ δ᾽ ἄνδιχα πᾶσα κεάσθη
> ἐν κόρυθι βριαρῇ· ὃ δ᾽ ἄρα πρηνὴς ἐπὶ νεκρῷ
> κάππεσεν, ἀμφὶ δέ μιν θάνατος χύτο θυμοραϊστής. (*Il.* 16. 577-580)
>
> Then glorious Hektor easily struck him, seizing upon the corpse,
> with a stone in the head, and it (the head) was entirely shattered to pieces
> inside the strong helmet, and he fell prone upon the corpse,
> and about him death the soul destroying was poured.

As he dies, Patroklos speaks to Hektor concerning his own impending doom, followed by the lines Ὣς ἄρα μιν εἰπόντα τέλος θανάτοιο κάλυψε (*Il.* 16.855), 'Then speaking thus the end of death covered him'. Later in the poem, Achilles slaughters Iphition, and we find the following lines:

> τὸν δ᾽ ἰθὺς μεμαῶτα βάλ᾽ ἔγχεϊ δῖος Ἀχιλλεὺς
> μέσσην κὰκ κεφαλήν· ἣ δ᾽ ἄνδιχα πᾶσα κεάσθη,
> δούπησεν δὲ πεσών, ὃ δ᾽ ἐπεύξατο δῖος Ἀχιλλεύς·
> κεῖσαι Ὀτρυντεΐδη πάντων ἐκπαγλότατ᾽ ἀνδρῶν·
> ἐνθάδε τοι θάνατος... (*Il.* 20.386-390)
>
> Godlike Achilles struck him with a spear as he pressed straight on,
> in the middle of the head, and it (the head) was completely shattered to
> pieces, and falling he sounded heavily, and godlike Achilles exulted over
> him,
> 'Lie there, son of Otrynteus, most fearful of all men,
> there is your death'.

Achilles brutally kills Deukalion:

> Δευκαλίωνα δ᾽ ἔπειθ᾽, ἵνα τε ξυνέχουσι τένοντες

ἀγκῶνος, τῇ τόν γε φίλης διὰ χειρὸς ἔπειρεν
αἰχμῇ χαλκείῃ· ὃ δέ μιν μένε χεῖρα βαρυνθεὶς
πρόσθ' ὁρόων θάνατον· ὃ δὲ φασγάνῳ αὐχένα θείνας
τῆλ' αὐτῇ πήληκι κάρη βάλε· μυελὸς αὖτε
σφονδυλίων ἔκπαλθ', ὃ δ' ἐπὶ χθονὶ κεῖτο τανυσθείς. (*Il.* 20.478-483)

Now he speared Deukalion where the tendons of the
elbow join, through his dear arm
with the point of bronze, and he (Deucalion) awaited him having been maimed in the hand,
looking death in the face, and he (Achilles) struck the neck with the sword
and cast far away the helmeted head, and the marrow spurted
out from the vertebrae and he lay upon the ground stretched out.

Achilles also names death to Lykaon, whom he is about to kill, and in order that the latter may know why there is to be no mercy shown to him as a suppliant, he tells him:

πρὶν μὲν γὰρ Πάτροκλον ἐπισπεῖν αἴσιμον ἦμαρ
τόφρά τί μοι πεφιδέσθαι ἐνὶ φρεσὶ φίλτερον ἦεν
Τρώων, καὶ πολλοὺς ζωοὺς ἕλον ἠδ' ἐπέρασσα·
νῦν δ' οὐκ ἔσθ' ὅς τις θάνατον φύγῃ ὅν κε θεός γε
Ἰλίου προπάροιθεν ἐμῇς ἐν χερσὶ βάλῃσι
καὶ πάντων Τρώων, περὶ δ' αὖ Πριάμοιό γε παίδων.
ἀλλὰ φίλος θάνε καὶ σύ· τί ἦ ὀλοφύρεαι οὕτως;
κάτθανε καὶ Πάτροκλος, ὅ περ σέο πολλὸν ἀμείνων. (*Il.* 21.100-107)

For before the fated day pursued Patroklos,
then it was dearer to my heart to be sparing in some way of the
Trojans, and I took many alive and I sold them as slaves.
But now there is no one who might escape death, whom the god
cast before my hands in front of Ilion,
not one of all the Trojans, and above them all, the children of Priam.
But you, friend, die also. Why indeed do you wail thus?
Even Patroklos died, he who was a better man than you by far.

Finally, as Hektor dies, he speaks a reproach to Achilles concerning the fact that Achilles has sworn to show the dead body no respect. He says:

φράζεο νῦν, μή τοί τι θεῶν μήνιμα γένωμαι
ἤματι τῷ ὅτε κέν σε Πάρις καὶ Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων
ἐσθλὸν ἐόντ' ὀλέσωσιν ἐνὶ Σκαιῇσι πύλῃσιν.
Ὣς ἄρα μιν εἰπόντα τέλος θανάτοιο κάλυψε (*Il.* 22.358-361)

Think on it now, lest I become in some way a source of wrath for you from the gods, on that day when Paris and Phoibos Apollo destroy you, although a noble man, before the Skaian gates.

Then thus speaking, the end of death covered him over.

As the life leaves Hektor's body, θάνατος is named.

What purpose do these unusual appearances of names for death serve within their respective passages?[31] In the case of θάνατος, death is often named as it occurs in conjunction with colour terminology. It is referred to as the πορφύρεος θάνατος (e.g. *Il.* 5.83, 16.334, 20.477) which closes over the eyes (hence obliterating light and life) whenever it appears in a hendiadys with μοῖρα,[32] and in its independent usages, we hear, for example, of the μέλαν νέφος θάνατου (*Il.* 16.350) which closes in about the head after the eyes have filled up with blood. In most other cases, θάνατος is named either as a liquid or cloud-like substance, pouring over the hero and hiding him from the light. Death obscures and obliterates (e.g. θάνατος δέ μιν ἀμφεκάλυψε, *Il.* 5.68, τέλος θάνατοιο κάλυψεν, 5.553, 16.502, 16.855 and 22.361, ἀμφὶ δέ οἱ θάνατος χύτο θυμοραϊστής, 13.544, 16.414 and 16.580, and in the words of Achilles to Iphition κεῖσαι,.. / ἐνθάδε τοι θάνατος... followed by the statement τὸν δὲ σκότος ὄσσε κάλυψε, 20, lines 389, 390 and 393 respectively). In all of these cases, the imagery is that of darkness descending over the senses, particularly, the eyes.[33]

There are three uses of θάνατος standing alone, without colour terminology or reference to the hiding of the hero, as we see first in σε τέλος θανάτοιο κιχήμενον, *Il.* 11.451, and second in μένε χεῖρα βαρυνθεὶς, πρόσθ' ὀρόων θάνατον· (*Il.* 20.480-481). Echeklos looks his death in the face. In Greek thought, to live is to look upon the light of the sun, and so the image of a man looking (and hence being vividly alive) in the face of death, which will bring to him the ultimate σκότος, is deeply chilling. The emphasis is clearly on the fact that Echeklos lives as yet, and the passage is reminiscent of the image of Κήρ dragging a man away while he is still alive (*Il.* 18.536). Moreover, the fact that sight/life is emphasized and juxtaposed with its impending loss, places this passage in the same category as those mentioned above, in which the darkness that falls over one obliterates all sentience. Of all these, only *Il.* 11.451 and 21.103, are without some connection to the sense of sight and its loss (which is none other than the biological condition of death).

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[31] To reiterate, the passages which name death as it occurs are *Il.* 5.79-83, 16.330-334, 20.474-477 (μοῖρα and θάνατος),12.116-117, 16.849-852, (μοῖρα) 4.396-397, 11.262-263, 16.856-857, 22.362-363 (πότμος), 2.859-861, 18.535-538 (κήρ) *Il.* 5.65-68, 5.553, 11.450-454, 13.541-544, 16.345-350, 16.411-414, 16.502-505, 16.577-580, 16.855, 20.386-390, 20.478-483, 21.100-107, 22.358-361 (θάνατος).

[32] Kirk 1990 p. 62, says of this phrase "The 'purple death over the eyes' is associated with blood in all three contexts..." The blood, of course, pours into the eyes and clouds them, obscuring vision and acting as harbinger of imminent death.

Μοῖρα, meanwhile, is referred to as δυσώνυμος (*Il.* 12.116) as it shrouds Asios in darkness, κραταιή (*Il.* 5. 83, 16. 334, and 20.477) when it is associated with darkness or blood covering over the eyes and ὀλοή (*Il.* 16. 849). Only in *Il.* 16.849 is μοῖρα named by the poet as it occurs with no specific connection to loss of sight.

Finally, κήρ is μέλαινα (*Il.* 2.859), again, as the darkness that obscures, and ὀλοή (*Il.* 18.535). In *Il.* 18.535, Κήρ is personified on the shield of Achilles as she drags victims to their doom. To call this a naming of death as it occurs is in fact not entirely accurate, as the death occurs on an artwork (the shield), a created construct, within the construct of the poem. It is the poet's rendering of an imaginary scene within the imaginary scene of the poem. It is not actually occurring in the narrative time of its naming, any more than deaths named in stories set in the past are (e.g. *Il.* 9.567-571). Most importantly, the death that is named in this passage is not real or present to the poem's characters.

Πότμος is the true exception to the rule. This word alone is mentioned without reference to darkness or blood, and is named as it occurs. It is said to be ἀεικέα (*Il.* 4.396), and men are described as πότμον ἀναπλήσαντες (*Il.* 11.263). As already

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[33] Clarke 1999 discusses the darkness of death on pp. 239-243.

mentioned, the ψυχαί of Hektor and Patroklos are said to be πότμον γοόωσα (*Il.* 16.857, 22.363). One might speculate that as the most neutral and (perhaps?) one of the more positive terms for death, the taboos against naming πότμος are not as rigidly enforced as they are for other death terms, but certainly nothing conclusive can be said on the matter.

Yet overwhelmingly death *is* nameless when it occurs within the poem, and in instances wherein the poet does name it, it is often in connection to words denoting the 'darkness' that mists over the eyes and obliterates sight. To live is to see the light of the sun. To be a corpse is to be deprived of this basic capacity. Therefore, one might suggest that these names for death are not entirely out of keeping with the poet's usual practice, in that they are present in contexts in which they are used to indicate a biological description of one of the most noticeable manifestations of the death of the body. They are, in fact, biological indicators in these passages, rather than ideological ones.

Having mentioned all the passages throughout the entire poem in which the chosen words appear as death terms, and having contended that in general (although by no means is it an absolute rule) they appear in passages in which death is not actually occurring, it would be useful at this point to mention some of the many passages in which death does occur, but is not named.

In such passages, we often find death depicted in great detail as a biological process, but not as something which a mortal can know, name or quantify while in the process of dying. The cessation of sensation precludes this very possibility. Most often, the narrator indicates that death has occurred either with a simple abrupt statement (which carefully avoids mentioning a word for death for formulaic reasons already mentioned), such as Ἄξυλον δ ’ ἄπ ’ ἔπεφνε βοὴν ἀγαθὸς Διομήδης / Τευθρανίδην (*Il.* 6.11-12), 'Diomedes good at the battle cry slaughtered Akamas, / son of Teuthras', or with a graphic physical description of the damage the body incurs while being killed.

Diomedes is the killer of many men in book five (and most of the deaths are nameless), but the lines in which we hear of the deaths of Astynoös and Hypeiron are noteworthy for their biological detail. We hear he kills them, τὸν μὲν ὑπὲρ μαζοῖο βαλὼν χαλκήρεϊ δουρί, / τὸν δ' ἕτερον ξίφεϊ μεγάλῳ κληῗδα παρ' ὦμον / πλῆξ', ἀπὸ δ' αὐχένος ὦμον ἐέργαθεν ἠδ' ἀπὸ νώτου (*Il.* 5.145-147), 'striking one above the nipple with a brass tipped spear, / and the other he struck with a great sword by the shoulder at the collar bone, / and he separated the shoulder from the neck and from the body'. Sarpedon kills Tlepolemos with a spear thrust, as we are told in the following, ...ὁ μὲν βάλεν αὐχένα μέσσον / Σαρπηδών, αἰχμὴ δὲ διαμπερὲς ἦλθ' ἀλεγεινή· / τὸν δὲ κατ' ὀφθαλμῶν ἐρεβεννὴ νὺξ ἐκάλυψε (*Il.* 5.657-659), 'Sarpedon struck the middle of the neck / and the grievous spear went right through / and down upon his eyes gloomy night covered him'. Fenik notes that "The combat between Tlepolemos and Sarpedon is made up of a collection of familiar details. Both men cast their spears at the same time; one is killed, the other wounded.[34]

Of similar detail is the passage in which Eurypylos kills Apisaon, in which we are told that he struck ἧπαρ ὑπὸ πραπίδων, εἶθαρ δ' ὑπὸ γούνατ' ἔλυσεν (*Il.* 11.579), 'the liver under the midriff, and at once he loosened his knees'. Aias kills Poulydamas with a spear, and we are told that:

> τόν ῥ' ἔβαλεν κεφαλῆς τε καὶ αὐχένος ἐν συνεοχμῷ,
> νείατον ἀστράγαλον, ἀπὸ δ' ἄμφω κέρσε τένοντε·
> τοῦ δὲ πολὺ πρότερον κεφαλὴ στόμα τε ῥῖνές τε
> οὔδει πλῆντ' ἤ περ κνῆμαι καὶ γοῦνα πεσόντος. (*Il.* 14.465-468)
>
> He struck at the junction of the head and the neck,
> the last vertebra, and he cut through both tendons.
> And his head and mouth and nose struck the ground

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[34] Fenik 1968 p. 67

much sooner even than his shins and knees as he fell.

Similarly, when Achilles kills Lykaon, a graphic passage ensues:

> ᾿Αχιλεὺς δὲ ἐρυσσάμενος ξίφος ὀξὺ
> τύψε κατὰ κληῖδα παρ᾽ αὐχένα, πᾶν δέ οἱ εἴσω
> δῦ ξίφος ἄμφηκες· ὁ δ᾽ ἄρα πρηνὴς ἐπὶ γαίῃ
> κεῖτο ταθείς, ἐκ δ᾽ αἷμα μέλαν ῥέε, δεῦε δὲ γαῖαν.
> τὸν δ᾽ ᾿Αχιλεὺς ποταμόνδε λαβὼν ποδὸς ἧκε φέρεσθαι, (*Il.* 21.116-120)[35]
>
> But Achilles, drawing the sharp sword
> struck him on the collar bone by the neck, and the
> double edged sword sank completely within, then prone upon the earth
> he lay, stretched out, and the dark blood flowed forth and wet the earth.
> But Achilles, seizing him by the foot, hurled him toward the river to be borne away.

It has been the purpose in this chapter to show that within the poem, death exists on two very different levels, the philosophical (imaginable) and the physical (unknowable). The first can be named, but the second denies any sort of classification by means of language. This vast chasm between cultural ideology and biological reality will therefore be the subject of the next chapter.

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[35] For a full list of passages related to biological death, see Garland 1981 pp. 56-57.

Chapter 4

Ideology and Reality: Cultural Construct and Biological Fact

Death not merely ends life, it also bestows upon it a silent completeness, snatched from the hazardous flux to which all things human are subject.

Hannah Arendt, *The Life of the Mind*, "Thinking," pt. 3, ch. 16 (1978).

The *Iliad* is a work which at times presents its audience with images of the violent destruction of the body, and at other times holds death off at an idealized distance. The naming or lack of naming of death is but one of the means the poem employs in presenting these different conceptions. Idealized, culturally conceived death is the death that the characters of the text attempt to understand and know, and the very physical death is that which the narrator suggests that they do not and cannot know.

The poem presents the heroic ideal of death in battle as a real cultural phenomenon, but on another level it questions the possibility of such an ideal in application. The result is a highly self-reflective literary work, in which there is an artistic view of the cultural construct that is heroic death (that is, the Homeric culture's view of the biological fact of death, and its attempt to civilize it). But from where do we derive our concept of what 'Homeric culture' is? J. M. Redfield, on the subject of the poem's relationship to the culture which produced it, makes the following claims:

> Our view of Homeric society, like our view of Homeric language, has been shaped by accidents of representation within a small body of evidence. No doubt we are often wrong. Yet, I allow myself one hypothesis which establishes an important control: I assume that the poem is a success. The poem can serve to interpret the culture if we assume that the poem is successfully founded on exactly that culture, so that any understanding of the implicit system of meanings will enable us to see this particular poem as more than a poem.[1]

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[1] Redfield 1975 Preface, p. xi.

He then goes on to offer the following:

> The poet may or may not imitate the details of his culture. But if his work, as a whole, is to be intelligible to his audience, he must have a profound understanding of his culture. Therefore, if we assume that the work is intelligible, we can deduce the culture from the work.[2]

While the above statement may sound reasonable enough at a glance, it should be pointed out that it is a flawed argument. We ourselves find the *Iliad* intelligible, but it is far from being 'of' our culture. Such reasoning does little to advance our understanding of the concept of 'Homeric culture'. Certain elements in the poem may be universal enough to be comprehensible to any member of any society, but that does not mean that any member of any society is capable of grasping the full extent of what Homer might have meant to his contemporary audience. I think K. A. Raaflaub best sums up what we can know of Homeric society when he addresses issues of historicity, and for his quote I refer the reader to page 14 of chapter one.

Still, the fact does remain that the poem is to some degree intelligible even outside the bounds of its own culture owing to the universality of the themes it treats and the profundity with which it treats them. The poem manages to deal with issues common to all peoples of all periods, and yet it does so within the strict boundaries of what we refer to as 'Homeric' culture. It is a text that is highly skilled in portraying the attitudes of the heroic world while simultaneously testing the validity of these attitudes, particularly as they pertain to the concept of heroic death. In order to draw clearly the paradoxes that exist in the concept of 'the good death' in battle, the poem treats death on both levels (cultural and biological), and purposefully juxtaposes the beliefs that the culture which he portrays hold about death and the universal, biological process of dying, which transcends all culture and is the fate of all who are βροτοί, regardless of place or period.

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[2] Ibid, p.79.

On the textual level, as already argued, the poem to some degree delineates the two aspects of death by means of naming it or describing it. However, the poem also employs a narratological distinction to help make clear this duality. Biological death is very often the death spoken of and described by the narrator and characters who are not heroes, while the cultural ideal of heroic death is often treated and named by the major focalizers of the text, the heroes themselves.

There is of course a danger in drawing absolute distinctions between the cultural and the biological. Even what we categorize as 'biological' is, by the process of categorization and interpretation, culturally influenced. Understanding, on the part of any culture, of what the 'biological fact' of death may be is clearly going to be tinged by the perceptions and preconceptions of the culture approaching the subject. This distinction between νόμος and φύσις is a dangerous one. Nonetheless, having acknowledged this danger and being wary of it, the distinction between the cultural and the biological is one that can be made both by the audience and the narrator, and it remains a viable way of talking about death within the poem.

How then, does the poem represent the ideals of its created world and the more universal realities which transcend all cultures? We have already explored named (intellectualized) and nameless (biological) death and looked at some of the passages in which they play a role. The intellectualized, culturally constructed death is the one with which humans console themselves in order to fight off the terror of the unknowable other, while the unknowable lurks just beyond the field of vision of the living heroes.

Conceptualized death is discussed by heroes. On the other end of the spectrum is death as expressed in the words of the seemingly detached narrator (although he too is a fictional character and hence, a focalizer), who graphically and frequently portrays the moment of death as the antithesis of the heroic. The narrator is the voice external to the story, providing a perspective removed from the cultural construct he presents (a perspective that his characters on the whole cannot share). Nevertheless, there are various points at which the boundaries are crossed, and narrator and character perspectives do not appear to be neatly sequestered (but more on this to come).

But why does the conflict between Heroic code and the reality of dying in battle require exploration at all? Certainly the heroic code is a guideline for conduct, but does not rigidly bind all of the actions of the warrior, and the conflict between the code's demands and the reality of battle situations is one of the elements that generate the poem's pathos. That there is both a heroic ideal and an element of dissent on the part of the heroes is no novel observation. Regardless, this tension is still worthy of fresh consideration, if only because it is still overlooked in modern studies (see pp. 121-125 on death-acceptance in scholarship), despite the very strong evidence the text provides for a more complex and meaningful conceptualization of mortality.

The evidence of this complexity abounds. In scenes wherein the narrator portrays death, heroes are frequently killed from behind as they flee, as they beg for their lives as suppliants, and as they are likened to subjugated women or animals[3]. Their deaths are often passed over with the barest possible detail (often in formulaic catalogue form), and this gives the audience the impression that in a war in which many die, no one death amounts to very much, and all such deaths are humiliating, inglorious, and ultimately futile. When they are described, it is in lengthy passages, in which the emphasis is placed strongly on the physical effects of damage done to the human body. If enough time is granted for the hero to react to imminent death, he typically does so with dread and fear, and even with shows of what may be construed as cowardice. These deaths are seldom named, but are depicted, predominantly in terms relating to the cessation of physical existence as a result of gross physical damage. Death, in the narrative passages, often eludes words altogether. It is unknowable, nameless, impersonal and devoid of personal intent or agency. It is the terror of the unfathomable abyss from which no one returns, and about which no one can really know anything. Even in the experience of dying the Homeric hero cannot know death, since after dying all sentience passes, and the ψυχή flits down to Hades' realm, incognizant of itself.

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[3] Schein 1984 makes this point p. 77.

This discrepancy between the cultural ideals that belong to the world within the poem, as expressed by the characters, and the narrative rendering has been commented on by R. Renehan. Of the various character speeches on the subject of heroic death (although he problematically assumes that the narrative voice is Homer's own), he writes:

> These several utterances set forth a coherent attitude towards heroic death that is unambiguous and basically not so very different from that found in other heroic cultures: every man must die, and a brave death in battle is the way to everlasting glory.
>
> Modern scholars take this attitude for granted in Homer...
>
> Such then is the theory of heroic death in Homer. What is the actual practice? To find the answer, we must first make a fundamental distinction between the narrative parts of the Homeric poems, in which the poet is speaking in his own person, and the speeches put into the mouths of characters. It is most significant that every one of the noble and heroic sentiments quoted above is from a speech; we are not hearing the poet narrating events *in propria persona.*[4]

I now want to examine this discrepancy in close detail, and we therefore begin by comparing what the heroes *tell* us of their attitudes towards heroic death by means of words, and what the narrator *shows* us of the attitudes of these same individuals towards death through their actions. The characters believe they have a notion of what death is, while the narrator, time and time again, demonstrates that they do not. To name something is to attempt to know it, control it, and civilize it, and to name death is to demonstrate the hope that this can be achieved. As mentioned in chapter 3 (p. 60-61), the naming of what is dangerous is often considered taboo. In naming death, the heroes attempt to deny its danger so that they might make manageable the terror of knowing that they could die at any time. The narrative passages, on the other hand, contain no such illusions of power. This distinction is summed up nicely: "Both the impulse to determine the time and place of death, and the dissociation of social death from the termination of bodily functions, clearly represent an attempt to control the unpredictable nature of biological death and hence dramatize the victory over biology."[5]

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[4] Renehan 1987 pp. 107-108.

Examples of detailed and horrifying passages pertaining to death in narrative passages are numerous. A number of the passages in which these types of death appear have already been cited. Among them, two detailed death scenes are provided in *Il.* 4. 517-531, while in *Il.* 13. 610-618 we find an extremely graphic depiction of the death of Peisandros, (similar to the passage in which Ilioneus is killed by Peneleos *Il.* 14.493-500), and in *Il.* 21.64-96, the narrator shows us the fear of Lykaon and his doomed attempts at supplication, prior to his death in lines 116-120 of the same book.[6] Also falling within the category of 'biological death' are passages such as *Il.* 5.72-75, about which passage Kirk remarks "...a good instance of Homer's supposed surgical precision. The contrast is unmistakable between this harsh pseudo-realism and the pathetic implications of Theano's care in 71."[7] Other examples include *Il.* 13.648-655, which narrates the wounding of Harpalion and *Il.* 17.616-619, narrating the death of Koiranos.

The nameless death of such passages is very much the death of the body and and is far removed from the ideology of the characters (although by necessity it is articulated by language, which contains implicit ideology). Death is not referred to as 'good' or 'beautiful', there is no reference made to κλέος either for the slayer or the slain, and there is no sense that the fallen face their fate resolutely. Indeed, Harpalion is killed while fleeing, and on this death Janko remarks "Harpalion's blow is ignoble, his retreat craven; hence his shameful wound in the buttock and his likeness to a worm."[8] The narrator does not attempt to reconcile the graphic imagery of carnage in war with any idealism at all. Instead, he chooses to give the audience the facts of injury to the body resulting in death, withholding personal comment. His silence speaks volumes, however, for the contrast is so vivid specifically *because* it is so devoid of the ideology we hear about in the character speeches.

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[5] Bloch and Parry 1982 p.15.
[6] For a list of more biologically focused passages relating to death, see chapter 3, pp.106-108.
[7] Kirk 1990, p. 61.
[8] Janko 1992 p. 126.

The speeches of warriors give us an insight into the values the warriors hold, and provide the rationale for heroic death which is missing from other components of the poem. In order to understand the ethical and philosophical issues that the poem raises, many scholars have attempted to engage the hero's perspective, often to the exclusion of the rest of the text.

There are a number of speeches concerning the heroic ideal made by Hektor and Achilles, and these will be discussed shortly. To begin, however, there are certainly others worth noting. In Glaukos' speech to Diomedes (*Il.* 6.145-149), death of the individual is accepted as part of the greater cycle of life and death within the community of humankind. Kirk says of it, although all of his examples are necessarily post-Homeric, "The likening of human generations to the fall of leaves in autumn and their growing again in spring carries no suggestion of rebirth, but means that life is transient and one generation succeeds another. It was a poetical commonplace[9] and recurs in Homer in a slightly different but no less striking form at 21.464-6."[10] M. West points out that these lines find precedents in Near Eastern literature. He categorizes this passage under the heading 'Miscellanea Orientalia', and explains that the thought expressed in here is paralleled in the Old Testament.[11] It is a comfort that one has a place in the greater order of things, and the cosmos makes sense even to a humankind possessing of severly limited understanding. It is ordered with beautiful precision, and all things have their natural lifespan and death at their appointed hour.

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[9] Cf. e.g. Mimnermus 2.1f., Aristophanes, *Birds* 685, with Clement, *Strom.* 6.738.

[10] Kirk 1990 p. 61.

[11] West 1997 p. 356, cites the following: "Man's days are like grass; like the blossom of the field, so he blooms. For the wind passes over it, and it is not there." (Ps. 103. 15f., cf. 90. 5f.). Similarly, "All flesh is grass...the grass dries up, the flower withers...The people is truly grass." (Isac 40. 6f., cf. Job 14. 2)

Sarpedon, in turn, making his famous speech to Glaukos, urges participation in battle, since, he claims, regardless of what a man does, he will in the end die, and so he may as well do so either winning glory for himself or granting it to another (*Il.* 12. 322-328).[12]

Idomeneus, in his speech to Meriones, boasts that only cowards fear death (indeed, their very skin changes hue at the thought of it), while brave men are fearless and meet death face on, being wounded from the front as they move forward to confront the enemy. A brave man is not struck from behind while retreating (*Il.* 13.275-291). Janko claims that the literary aim of this speech is humour, with a "mildly ribald *double entendre* at the expense of Meriones, who has lost his spear (292f.)."[13] If this passage is indeed intended to be humourous, then the poet is playing on the fact that the ideal is, to some extent, inapplicable to Meriones, even though Idomeneus extols it.[14] If one considers the catalogue of deaths to be found within the poem, as compiled by Garland, one will quickly notice that deaths from behind occur almost as often as deaths face on.[15]

However, when attempting to compare what characters/focalizers say they feel about death with what the narrator/focalizer shows us that they feel about death, the most obviously noteworthy example involves the death of Hektor. In *Il.* 6. 486-489, we find Hektor speaking to his wife, Andromache, on the inevitability of the fate of death for all living creatures, including both brave men and cowards. As G. S. Kirk observes, "Hektor's tone so far is rhetorical and prophetic".[16] Although he presents himself as calmly accepting whatever fate is bestowed upon him, the fact remains that during this exchange with his wife, he has every hope that he will come back from the battlefield alive (and indeed, he survives for the next 16 books). Achilles has, as yet, not returned to the war, and the epic audience knows full well that Hektor can be killed by no lesser man. Hektor's own words on the subject of death are the very essence of the heroic ideal.

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[12] The argument put forward is remarkably similar to that of Achilles (*Il.* 9.318-322, cited previously), in which Achilles adopts a point of view quite similar to those found in narrative passages. Achilles uses the same argument to reach a completely different conclusion. For Sarpedon, death is inevitable for mortals, and so one may as well attempt to die with glory. For Achilles, death for mortals is inevitable, and so there is no point to exerting oneself to die well. That the poet uses the same argument to support two divergent points of view is surely no accident, and it may well be present to show the audience that unlike the narrator, characters are not omniscient nor necessarily even wise, and so character speeches should be taken with the understanding that they represent the opinions of fallible βροτοί on ultimately unfathomable subjects. See also Hektor to Andromache in *Il.* 6.486-490.

Interestingly, West 1997 finds a parallel here between the Greek sentiment expressed by Sarpedon and the Mesopotamian hero Gilgamesh. He cites the following (p. 381):

> Who, my friend, can go up to heaven?
> The gods d[well] with Shamash for ever,
> but as for man, his days are numbered; all his activity is just wind.
> You, do you now fear death? What about your warrior strength? (OBV Yale fr., iv 5-10)

[13] Janko 1992 p. 81.

[14] Setting this interpretation aside, we might wonder why so many of the poem's heroes are in fact killed from behind while fleeing. Why is it so common for them to hide amidst a crowd in order to avoid κήρ, as discussed in the section on that word in the third chapter (pp. 96-98)?

[15] Garland 1981 p.p. 52-53.

Yet in *Iliad* book 22, Hektor, the mightiest of the Trojans, turns to flee for his life around the walls of Troy when confronted with death at the hands of Achilles, despite his former resolve to stand his ground and either kill Achilles or be killed. Compare the lines ἐμοὶ δὲ τότ' ἂν πολὺ κέρδιον εἴη / ἄντην ἢ 'Αχιλῆα κατακτείναντα νέεσθαι, / ἠέ κεν αὐτῷ ὀλέσθαι ἐϋκλειῶς πρὸ πόληος (108-110, 'For me then it would be better by far / either opposing Achilles, having put him to death, to come back / or to be destroyed gloriously by him before the city') with the following, from the same book, Ἕκτορα δ', ὡς ἐνόησεν, ἕλε τρόμος· οὐδ' ἄρ' ἔτ' ἔτλη / αὖθι μένειν, ὀπίσω δὲ πύλας λίπε, βῆ δὲ φοβηθείς (136-137, 'Fear seized Hector when he saw him, and he no longer dared / to remain there, but he left the gates behind and went, terrified') to observe the impact that awareness of the nearness of one's own demise has on even the bravest of warriors. Richardson comments on lines 136-137 that the "Two verses containing four, sharp sentences, which describe Hektor's terror and flight, contrast with the fluid five verses about Akhilleus' pursuit which follows at 138-42".[17] The terror of realization is starkly and dramatically drawn, and there can be no mistaking the sentiment behind it. The narrator shows us very clearly that the ideals by which

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[16] Kirk 1990 commenting on lines 487-489 in book 6, p.224.

[17] Richardson 1993 commenting on lines 136-138 in book 22, p.122.

Hektor believes he has lived and is willing to die amount to very little when he is confronted with his own imminent death. His earlier words and his current actions do not mesh. In fact, Hektor continues to flee, until Athena sends him a false vision of his brother, Deïphobos, come to give him aid. Trusting in the vision, Hektor takes heart and musters the courage to stand his ground and face his opponent at last, only to realize he is alone as Achilles moves in upon him. Knowing now that his doom is at hand, he attempts to summon into himself the strength to face whatever is about to happen, saying μὴ μὰν ἀσπουδί γε καὶ ἀκλειῶς ἀπολοίμην, / ἀλλὰ μέγα ῥέξας τι καὶ ἐσσομένοισι πυθέσθαι (*Il.* 22.304-305, 'May I not die without glory or struggle, but accomplishing some great thing to be known by men to come'). By now the audience knows, via the narrator, that this is not Hektor's initial response to the approach of death. It is, at best, a grim attitude of resignation towards what can no longer, by any devices, be avoided. Hektor is clearly frightened at the prospect of his own death, and yet as the best of the Trojan warriors, he is not someone whom we expect to fall short of the heroic ideal.

Because of the uniqueness of each heroic death, it is difficult not to see the end of each life as a separate and keenly felt, personal and personalized matter. The individuality of each specific death overrides the universality of the process of dying. The poem presents the audience with the universal fact of death, what the culture within the poem believes of it, and Hektor's immediate reaction to it which supersedes the cultural ideal for which he strives, (although, of course, Hektor's "true" reaction is a poetic construct no less artificial than the heroic ideal constructed by the culture Homer narrates). The narrator sets up ideals only to puncture the illusion of their reality. The heroic ideal is an artificial, cultural construct intended to make violent death acceptable, yet it is presented within an artificial, contrived poetic world which questions this acceptability. Hektor, only when denied further opportunity to avoid death, achieves an ideal in which even he does not express absolute faith.

This display of death avoidance illustrates the basic duality inherent in the heroic ideal. On the one hand, the hero wishes to die well, and frequently discusses this need, yet on the other hand, heroes do not actually look to end their lives deliberately, and death remains a hateful reality. R. Renehan writes, "...the heroic warrior confronts his death with a dignity born of bravery, unafraid and defiant to the end".[18] However, as he points out, throughout the *Iliad* instances of dignified heroic death are conspicuous by nothing so much as their very absence. Only the deaths of Sarpedon, Patroklos and Hektor may be viewed as being heroic at all, and of these, Sarpedon alone manages to remain defiant and unflinching to the last, (Patroklos is killed while attempting to flee, and Hector, as discussed above, is shown to be torn between his desire to live up to his social ideal, and his very real terror of approaching death).[19] The interplay between the hero's defiance in the face of his mortality and his fundamental dread of it is a major thematic element of the text, and the problems intrinsic to the application of the heroic ideal are made clear time and time again. Often the ideal is emphasised by its absence or its direct opposite. As Renehan has commented, the opening lines of book 1 announce the degree of devastation and death which Achilles has brought about, not by any heroic, brave or glorious acts, but rather by means of their very opposite, inactivity. As Renehan says, "At the very outset, Homer suggests where his priorities lie– or rather, where they do not lie."[20]

Nonetheless, the poem is sometimes read with the assumption that all that is presented by the poet is as it should be in a world in which the heroic ideal applies, despite the contradictory representations of death found in narrative passages. Various scholars have acknowledged that the heroic ideal is portrayed ambiguously (even critically) throughout the work, but overwhelmingly they conclude that the ideal is still upheld as a tenable one. For example, S. Schein argues that the negative imagery present in the narrative scenes serves to reinforce the pathos of life cut down in its prime. By emphasizing the sacrifice made by the hero the poem magnifies his heroic glory. Even Achilles (who will be discussed as a rather unique case in chapter five), he argues, fits the heroic pattern without posing too great a difficulty:

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[18] Renehan 1987 p.100.
[19] Ibid. p. 109.

> To be sure, in the course of the *Iliad* Achilles comes to question and contradict the validity of the normative social value system. This disillusionment enhances Achilles' tragedy and constitutes part of Homer's critical exploration of the nature and conditions of heroism and of human life. Nevertheless, for Achilles and for everyone else in the poem, there is no real alternative. Life is lived and death is died according to this code of values: to be fully human – that is, to be a hero – means to kill or be killed for honor and glory.[21]

J. Griffin, meanwhile, writes:

> The most powerful descriptions of death in battle are that of Hector, recognizing that 'the gods have called me to my death...now my destiny has caught me,' and resolving to die fighting; Patroklos, disarmed and exposed helpless to death; Lycaon, arms outstretched, seeing death before him. Achilles, too, though the poem does not show his death, accepts and faces it; for this is what interests the poet very much, the sight of the hero succeeding in facing his own death. It is to produce and emphasise this situation that Homeric fighting is stylized as it is, when it might for instance have been developed much more as blow-by-blow accounts for the expert, interested in the technical details of fighting. The chariot race in Book 23 is treated much more in that manner. Walter Marg called the *Iliad* 'the poem of death'. I think it will be more appropriate to call it the poem of life and death: of the contrast and transition between the two. This is what the poet is concerned to emphasize, and on this he concentrates his energies and our gaze. It is part of the greatness of Achilles that he is able to contemplate and accept his own death more fully and more passionately than any other hero.[22]

Yet it must be noted that in making these claims, Griffin relies on the very deaths of Hektor and Patroklos, who flee in terror, Lykaon, who beseeches Achilles as a suppliant

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[20] Ibid. p. 115.

[21] Schein 1984 p. 71. His chapter on "War, Death and Heroism", pp. 67-88, discusses these ideas in detail.

[22] Griffin 1980 pp. 94-95.

for mercy, and Achilles, whose death does not even occur in the poem.[23] Renehan's point that only one truly heroic death occurs throughout all 24 books is hard to overlook, and this fact alone must cause us to reconsider our preconceptions about the heroic code and death in general. It is possible that all that is contradictory to the heroic ideal in the poem is there to *emphasize* the heroic ideal, acting as a foil, but it is far more likely that all that contradicts the heroic ideal in the poem is there to show that the issues are complex and may be approached from a variety of perspectives.

Nevertheless, a very great deal of influential work has been written on the subject of straightforward death acceptance. This is a somewhat problematic area, as death acceptance relies very much on the idea of the 'good death'. The 'good death' must imply the other kind, as is summed up nicely by M. Bloch and J. Parry in the following, taken from the introduction of their edition to comparative and cross-cultural essays, "The 'good' regenerative death can only be construed in antithesis to an image of the 'bad' death, which it therefore implies. It requires and must even emphasise what it denies, and cannot obliterate that on which it feeds."[24]

Yet death-acceptance and the concept of the 'beautiful death' are both argued for by J. P. Vernant. His work has been particularly influential on the subject of the later civic ideology of death, as has that of N. Loraux.[25] Vernant draws a contrast between two dominant images of death in ancient Greece. His claim is that the fearful aspect of death as a terror expressing the unspeakable and the unthinkable is death presented as a feminine figure, death as a maleficent force as personified by Γοργώ or Κήρ. The masculine face of death, Θάνατος, he argues, is not terrifying or monstrous, and is even depicted in art as a warrior who has been able to find the perfect fulfillment of his life in the 'beautiful death'. As he points out, the warrior fallen in battle remains forever present in men's lives and memories, as epic continually celebrates his name and glory.[26] The beautiful death provides for the hero one final absolute standard by which he is validated: "In a beautiful death, excellence no longer has to be measured indefinitely against others and keep proving itself in confrontation; it is realized at one stroke and forever in the exploit that puts an end to the life of the hero." He goes on to say that in a culture like that of Archaic Greece, each person exists as a function of others, through the eyes of others, and that in such a culture, true death is oblivion, silence, and obscure indignity. To exist, living or dead, is to be recognized.[27] Furthermore, the status given to the beautiful dead is a means by which society attempts to domesticate and civilize death.[28] For Vernant, Hektor's show of fear before dying counts for nothing at all; the poet may as well have left it out altogether, since it is Hektor's death alone, and not how he faces it, that will define him for eternity:

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[23] Although early on in the poem Achilles does hold the heroic ideal in high regard (he criticizes Agamemnon for failing to live up to it in book 1.225-228), after his conflict with him, his point of view drastically changes. Indeed, if anything, Achilles refutes the possibility of the heroic ideal in *Il.*9.400-409. Even when he returns to battle, it is not because he has experienced a restoration of faith in the heroic value system, but because he wishes to avenge the death of his closest companion. Although Homeric epic does not narrate his death, we do see Achilles' post-mortem in *Od.* 11, wherein he laments his choice of fates (lines 488-491). Granted, the *Odyssey* may be by a different poet than the *Iliad*, but nonetheless, it would seem that there is very little in the corpus of Homeric epic to support the claim that Achilles faces his death 'more fully and passionately than any other hero'. In fact, Achilles so often rages *against* heroic death, that he is the one hero who seems to support the critical point of view towards heroic death which is found in narrative passages. His unique status in this regard will be treated in detail in the next chapter.

[24] M. Bloch and J. Parry 1982 p. 18.

> Beneath the walls of Troy that have watched him flee in desperation before Achilles, Hektor now stands still. He knows he is about to die. Athena has tricked him; all the gods have abandoned him. Fate (moira) has already laid its hand upon him. Even though it is no longer in his power to conquer and survive, he must still fulfill the demands that warrior status makes on him and his peers; he must transform his death into eternal glory, change the fate of all creatures subject to demise into a blessing that is his alone and whose luster will be his forever.[29]

Nonetheless, it cannot be denied that the poet *has* seen fit to let the audience see Hektor's fear and desire to prolong life. Transformed by his death though he may be

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[25] See for example, Vernant 1989, 1991 and Loraux 1986.

[26] Vernant 1991 p. 95.

[27] Ibid. p. 85.

[28] Ibid. p. 96.

insofar as he is enshrined in the cultural memory of epic, the audience of the poem has still glimpsed something beyond the surface beauty of the heroic death which Vernant claims Hektor has achieved. The audience has been shown the inexorable nothingness of non-existence that waits to receive all mortals, as Hektor teeters on the threshold between worlds, filled with sheer animal terror. It is for the audience that the epic is sung, and if fame and glory exist in the singing, it is because there are listeners. That the listeners, those who bestow immortality by keeping the hero's name alive in their collective memories, have been allowed to see Hektor's flight around the walls of Troy, is remarkable. It is for this that he is entered into cultural memory, as well as for the fact of his 'good death'. Terror has a greater impact on Hektor than the promise of eternal glory in song, and the lines of the song which describe this terror may well possess more poetic impact for the audience than all of Hektor's earlier statements of his intention to die well in battle combined.

However, Vernant is not alone in his claims for death-acceptance. C. Sourvinou-Inwood, writing from what she refers to as a 'post-structuralist' approach (although fundamentally her approach is derived from P. Ariès, the French social historian[30]) on what she perceives to be Homer's death acceptance, recently produced *"Reading" Greek Death.* She has also produced a number of journal publications, working on the ideas contained within her book.[31] Essentially, Sourvinou-Inwood believes that in the *Iliad* death is presented as a universal, unavoidable and ultimately unfrightening prospect. Death, she argues, is, to the world of epic poetry, part of the process of regeneration and continuity of the community as a whole:

> Another Homeric concept expressing the same attitude is that of one's "lot" or "portion" of death, *moira thanatoio: moira* means first of all

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[29] Ibid. p. 50.

[30] Ariès 1974 holds very much to the belief in early death acceptance. On attitudes towards death, he says "The first, the oldest, the longest held, and the most common one, is the familiar resignation to the collective destiny of the species and can be summarized by the phrase, *Et moriemur*, and we shall all die." (p. 55)

[31] See her 1981 and 1983 articles.

> "portion" and then also "fate". This concept of "portion of death" which becomes "fate of death" is firmly rooted in the epics; behind it lies the idea that death is the lot of man, and that each death is less a personal tragedy—sad though it is—than the fulfillment of that fate. The mentality behind this whole nexus is one which sees the world as an ordered and articulated cosmos, in which everything has an apportioned place, and each person a portion of life, after which he gets his lot of death, and this is how the life-cycle of the universe works.[32]

Moreover:

> Acceptance of one's mortality and vulnerability in the face of this familiar ever-present death led to a matter-of-fact acceptance of the prospect of one's death and the rejection of death-avoidance as a determining factor in one's behaviour. The early Greek love of life did not involve obsession with life-prolongation: the prospect of dying now rather than later does not deter men from pursuing honour in battle.[33]

Death is an inescapable universal, and in this Sourvinou-Inwood obviously cannot be disputed. However, as some have pointed out in response to her, it is also a very particular thing, unique for each individual (consider for example, that no two death descriptions in the *Iliad* are identical—it seems unlikely that this is by chance).[34] As W. Burkert has pointed out in commenting on her article "Trauma in Flux: Death in the Eighth Century and After", an attitude of death acceptance on the part of society *as a whole* does not preclude the possibility of very real death avoidance *on the part of the individual.*[35] How one feels about the death of others and how one faces one's own death may well be two different things.

J. Bremmer, in his study of death in early Greece praises the work of C. Sourvinou-Inwood. Nonetheless, he breaks with her views on death-acceptance and argues that it is indeed being questioned (indeed, we only have to look to Odysseus for clear evidence of this fact):

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[32] Sourvinou-Inwood 1981 p.23.

[33] Ibid p. 24.

[34] As mentioned in the previous chapter, Garland 1981 provides an index of passages relating to deaths in the *Iliad* and Fenik 1968 gives detailed treatment to all the deaths mentioned in books 5, 8, 11, 13, 16 and 17. For quick reference to individual heroes, he provides an index of the names of those whose death he treats (pp.241-243).

[35] Discussion following Sourvinou-Inwood 1983 p. 49.

> Homeric beliefs reflect the life of the small, closely knit communities of the Dark Ages where the life of the community was more important than the survival of the individual. In these communities death was not yet so much the end of one person's life but rather an episode in the history of the community and the life cycle. However, the sweeping changes in Greek society in the eighth century and after promoted an individualization that created individual concern for death and survival.[36]

Although the poem is frequently viewed as exhibiting a simple acceptance of death, it is clear that there is a good deal of ambivalence towards, and even evasion of, heroic death demonstrated in the *Iliad.* Most deaths in the *Iliad* are in fact humiliating slaughterings of victims rendered helpless and passive.[37]

S. Schein takes a middle line in his approach to the issue of death-acceptance, arguing that both questioning and celebrating of the heroic code are present in the poem. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, he argues that the negative imagery presented in connection with violent death is only present to reinforce the pathos of young life cut short, and thereby to underline heroic glory by emphasizing the magnitude of the sacrifice made.[38] Still, he acknowledges the ambiguity that exists, and points out how often Homer compares war to hunting, showing a predatory animality in the heroes. He claims that the psychological connection between hunting and warfare is self-conscious on the poet's part, because he is making the point that brutality in war perverts its true purpose, bringing humans closer to other animals than it does to the gods. He also comments upon the various references to heroes who wish to eat the livers of their foes raw, commenting that war is seen as an outlet for cannibalistic impulses, and thus reveals people at their most animalistic.[39]

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[36] Bremmer 1983 p.124.

[37] Renehan 1987. The works of Fenik 1968 and Redfield 1975 are both invaluable for discussion of Homer's treatment of these scenes. See also Nagy 1979 and Marg, "Kampf und 1976.

[38] Schein 1984 pp. 67-88.

J. Griffin also acknowledges that war breaks down the boundaries of civilized behaviour, citing the fact that five times in the *Iliad* warriors beg for their lives as suppliants. Despite Greek social convention which should mandate that suppliants be spared, they are killed. Yet social conventions, he argues, should be the framework within which heroic battle occurs. Nevertheless, the poem shows this very convention being outraged and overturned. The heroic battle is portrayed as being fought *against* heroic codes.[40] The text manipulates the rules by which the world it portrays functions, and the resulting effect is that there is fissure in the fabric of that world.

There is an interesting facet to Hektor's death which helps to emphasise the interplay between the acceptance and avoidance of death in the poem. This is the matter of how the poem's characters who are *not* warriors react to 'the good death'. While it is true that all expressions of acceptance of the heroic ideal are framed in character speeches, for the most part, those characters are the *warriors* themselves (as seen in passages such as *Il.* 12.322-328, 13.279-285, 18.114-118, and 22.297-305, all cited previously). Character speeches from non-warriors reflect explicitly the same horror of death implicit in the narrative passages, although as characters, non-warriors too belong to the heroic culture. The characters (secondary narrators/focalizers) who are not heroes are perhaps best understood as providing the embedded voice of the narrator, as indeed does Achilles. They therefore name death, and are shown to be torn between their culturally constructed ideals, and the biological reality of a loved one turned into a corpse. If those around the hero protest the heroic death, heroic death becomes somewhat self-indulgent insofar as the hero overlooks personal responsibilities to kin in favour of his own glory (claiming it is for his kin that he attempts to achieve glory). The desperate plight of survivors is illustrated in a passage concerning women made widows by the war (*Il.* 24.725-738) and by Andromache (*Il.* 6.407-439).

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[39] Ibid, p.79.

[40] Griffin 1980 p. 53. This is perhaps not entirely so clear cut as Griffin makes it seem. Although there are social conventions for governing conduct in normal circumstances, it is worth remembering that there is no law in war. Ordinary codes of conduct may well be suspended.

In theory, the values the warriors hold must be indicative of the values of their culture as a whole, and they hope to be remembered by their culture through epic because the culture does indeed value heroic death. Nonetheless, the poem shows us on numerous occasions that death acceptance on the part of society as a whole does not preclude the possibility of death avoidance on the part of the individual. This is clearly true of the heroes themselves and there is no reason why it should not be equally true of the individuals in the poem who are not warriors.

Just as a warrior may re-evaluate his desire to die well when confronted with its realization, so too, may members of the warrior's family re-evaluate their accepted beliefs about the 'beautiful death' when cleaving to social ideals must mean being willing to lose one who is dear to them. These characters face their own complex issues concerning the heroic ideal in its application. The ideology which they embrace as a culture proves little compensation for the reality of loss.

Those affected by the death of Hektor are numerous. Indeed, as he is the best warrior of the Trojans, when he dies, the whole city knows it will soon fall, and mourns his death as the death of Troy itself. Prior to his confrontation with Achilles, Hektor has an encounter with his parents, an encounter in which Priam both acknowledges the heroic ideal, and begs his son not to pursue it (*Il.* 22.37-91). This passage is profoundly moving in its evocative imagery and universally human sentiment. Priam points out that while death may be beautiful for Hektor, young and glorious as he is, it is harsh and ugly for the elderly who are killed violently. The image of an old man struck down by the sword is an aberration of all that heroic society holds proper; it goes against θέμις itself. With Hektor dead, Troy will have no protection, and so, Priam argues, he himself will be doomed to the ugliest of deaths, after which he will be food for the dogs, and moreover, without proper funeral rites, his ψυχή will be unable to enter Hades' realm. All this emphasis is on what is ugly and brutal in war, and pathos is developed on behalf of all the innocent victims, namely, the wives and parents and children of warriors. It may be glorious for a hero to die well, but he leaves behind survivors who suffer and sacrifice just as greatly, although they are not granted eternal κλέος because they do not die on the battlefield. If Hektor has no thought for his own life, his parents urge him to have thought for what will befall those who depend on him after he is dead.

It is clear from this passage that whatever ideals Priam and Hecuba may accept as a general, abstract principle of the society to which they belong, they can no longer accept it unflinchingly when confronted with the loss of their own most glorious child. They must also face the practical reality of what will happen to them after Hektor dies, and this is as grim a fact as the grief they will experience for their most cherished son.

Andromache, too, is a symbol of the suffering of innocents in time of war, and through her speeches we are provided with another poignant perspective on heroic death, via the eyes of one who fears she will outlive her husband. Like Priam and Hecuba, Andromache appeals to Hektor's pity for those who rely on his protection for their well being, namely, herself and their infant son (*Il.* 6.405-413 and 429-434).

Andromache's plea, like that of Priam and Hecuba, is without result. Although the fate of his wife and child weigh upon him greatly, as he puts it (*Il.* 6.444-446), he has learned to be valiant and to win glory for both himself and his father, although his death will result in the death of his father. Hektor's answer to his wife is not without compassion, but nonetheless, he remains resolute.[41]

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[41] DeJong 1989 pp. 177-178 discusses this passage as providing an example of an embedded speech which is formally a quotation but in reality derives completely from the mind of the character speaking. She remarks on lines 459-462 that his speech falls into the category of those embedded in which a speaking character envisions something being spoken at some future point in time by an anonymous

Hektor argues away his responsibilities to family, clearly placing more importance on the responsibilities which his status as a warrior place upon him in the eyes of his society. As J.M. Redfield has remarked, "To be incapable of retreat is in a certain way noble, but it is also, like any incapacity, a weakness, a loss of the fullness of human potentiality."[42] Nonetheless, as he says, "In the conversation between Hector and Andromache the poet dramatizes the pain of the warrior's role, of the man who, on behalf of his family, must leave his family, so that his very defense of them becomes a betrayal."[43]

The heroic code is something learned, rather than a natural or instinctive reaction to physical danger on the battlefield. As something learned, the warrior code is acknowledged as being something transmitted culturally to the warrior. As a cultural, learned behaviour, it is based on the ideology of society, and stands quite distinctly apart from the personal reality of dying. Hektor's ideology will fail him when he comes face to face with death in the persona of Achilles, and clearly, the ideology of 'death-acceptance' fails his parents and wife, as they contemplate their imminent loss.

The death of any hero has broad sweeping ramifications for those close to him, although the poem emphasises this more when the warrior is one of great fame. Like Hektor, Achilles is poignantly aware of the devastation his death will cause for his parents. His mother, although immortal and immune to the harsh fate awaiting Hektor's aged parents, suffers as no mortal can. As an immortal, she is doomed to watch her mortal offspring perish, and she can never hope to be released from grief by oblivion herself. Knowing the fate Achilles has chosen makes it even harder for her, and she mourns him as though he were already dead, as she tells him (*Il.* 24.131-132). In the same book, it is to Peleus, father of Achilles, that Priam refers when he attempts to

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'somebody'. This speech does not in fact contain a quotation, but an imaginary speech put into the mouth of somebody else.

[42] Redfield 1975 p. 150.

[43] Ibid, p. 123.

evoke compassion in the killer of his son, and indeed, thinking about the effect his imminent death will have upon his father does move Achilles to tears (*Il.* 24.485-512).

Generally, heroic characters cleave to the heroic ideal in their speeches, and show a distinct lack of resolve in their actions, while non-heroic characters display ambivalence through words alone. Achilles, however, is an exception. He himself acts as an embedded voice for the narrator, and among the heroes he is entirely unique, in that it is through his *speeches* that we see his dissension, not through his conduct in the face of danger. Agamemnon's outrage against him forces him to reconsider those for whom he wins glory, and the worthiness of those to whose memories he entrusts the immortality of his name. After Achilles withdraws from the war, he undergoes a change of perspective. He alone of the heroes does not need to confront the moment of his own death before he entertains doubts as to the validity of the values of the warrior ethic, and, as mentioned above, he alone of the heroes makes a character speech criticizing this ethic. Because he is a special case, he will be treated in more detail in chapter 5, but it is worth noting here that Achilles, in *Iliad* book 9, speaks about how, irrespective of the gifts one amasses in life, once a man is dead nothing can give him his life back again:

> οὐ γὰρ ἐμοὶ ψυχῆς ἀντάξιον οὐδ᾽ ὅσα φασὶν
> Ἴλιον ἐκτῆσθαι, εὖ ναιόμενον πτολίεθρον,
> τὸ πρὶν ἐπ᾽ εἰρήνης, πρὶν ἐλθεῖν υἷας ᾽Αχαιῶν,
> οὐδ᾽ ὅσα λάϊνος οὐδὸς ἀφήτορος ἐντὸς ἐέργει,
> Φοίβου ᾽Απόλλωνος, Πυθοῖ ἔνι πετρηέσσῃ.
> ληϊστοὶ μὲν γάρ τε βόες καὶ ἴφια μῆλα,
> κτητοὶ δὲ τρίποδές τε καὶ ἵππων ξανθὰ κάρηνα·
> ἀνδρὸς δὲ ψυχὴ πάλιν ἐλθεῖν οὔτε λεϊστὴ
> οὔθ᾽ ἑλετή, ἐπεὶ ἄρ κεν ἀμείψεται ἕρκος ὀδόντων. (*Il.* 9.401-409)
>
> For not worthy of my life is however much they say
> Ilion possessed, the well settled city,
> Formerly in peace, before the sons of the Achaians came,
> Nor however much the stony threshold of the archer, Phoibos Apollo,
> in rocky Pytho, confines within,
> To be carried off as booty are cattle and stout sheep,
> tripods may be gotten and the golden heads of horses;
> but the life of a man cannot come back nor can it be carried off as booty,
> nor caught, when it has passed the barrier of the teeth.

It may be argued that the embassy has offered material possessions as opposed to κλέος, and so Achilles' relpy emphasises material possessions rather than κλέος. Yet Achilles is being asked to re-commit to fighting and dying. For fighting, material possessions will be his prize, but for dying, the audience knows full well the promise is κλέος. There is no reason why, for rhetorical reasons, Achilles' response to the embassy must avoid the value of the unspoken, and to the warrior, more esteemed, reward. The fact that Achilles neglects to mention κλέος as a possible recompense for dying, even as something to be rejected, may be read as an indication that for him, glory in song after death to be celebrated only by those who will survive him is of even less consequence than material possessions which he may himself enjoy in life. Κλέος may in fact be completely inconsequential in Achilles' contemplation of the choice to be made between life and death, although it is all that the poem can offer him. Κλέος relies on the memory of men, and as Achilles has realized forcefully, men are fallible.

The 'good death' has ceased to hold any beauty for him, as he now realizes that glory and renown among men of lesser worth is worth very little in itself. Moreover, regardless how a man dies, all do die in the end, and so one's conduct in matters of life and death, he concludes, is of little consequence (*Il.* 9.318-322 and 401-409). When the epic audience encounters him again in book 11 of the *Odyssey*, his view of death will be in no way improved.

It is also significant that Achilles is ill equipped to deal with the 'beautiful death' of his companion Patroklos. Grief is entirely human, but according to the heroic code by which both men live and are prepared to die, Achilles should, in theory, at least be grateful that his comrade was killed in battle by so renowned a warrior as Hektor, for to die at the hands of a great warrior brings glory both to the killer and to the slain. The theme of Achilles' excessive and debilitating grief need hardly be explored in any detail here, but it is worth noting that the ideology of heroic death is at odds with Achilles' true reaction to the reality of loss.[44] In this respect, Achilles has much in common with non-heroic characters who must come to terms with grief, and like them, he acts as an embedded narrator/focalizer.

Patroklos departs from life in much the same way as does Hektor. Both attempt to flee prior to being killed, and both men speak to their killers as they die, waiting for the ψυχή to depart (*Il.* 16.856-857 and 22.362-363, for text and translation see chapter three p.114). These lines are very telling concerning the true possibility of heroic death in application. Both heroes have died the 'good death', struck down by a worthy adversary at the height of their prowess and youth. Both will be remembered by their culture and immortalized in epic, fixed, as it were, at their most perfect moment. Nonetheless, the emphasis is very much on loss, specifically, the loss of manhood and youth, rather than on what has been gained. It has been argued that the scansion of ἀνδροτῆτα dates back to the Mycenaean period (or even earlier), and this would seem to argue against the lines reflecting innovation on the part of the poet. Nonetheless, it has also been pointed out that the entire couplet (lines 856-857) cannot be traced to Bronze Age poetry (even the καί is post-Mycenaean). Thus, the poem need not be entirely dependant on oral tradition or formula here, and so innovation on the part of the poet cannot be ruled out.[45] This is a scene of departure, and it very closely resembles, in both sense and feeling the laments of survivors already cited. Life mourns itself and its loss and death, rather than magnifying and making imperishable manhood and youth, which one surely would expect the 'beautiful' death to do; death submerges it, and makes it as though the hero had never been. The ψυχή does not relish its fate (it is still presumed sentient until the proper funerary rites are performed for the corpse), and from all the evidence, including the visit of Patroklos' shade to Achilles, the hero reaps none of the benefits of his heroic death. He is in no way aware of the glory attached to his name once he is dead, and it is only after he is dead that this glory will be his. The hero must die for something others will have to experience for him. In light of the fact that the hero's family frequently suffer death or slavery after his death, one may well wonder for whom he has died, since there are no discernible benefits to anybody.

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[44] So excessive is his grief, that the shade of Patroklos must appear to him in a dream to request a proper burial. During this exchange, we get a gloomy picture of the fate of the dead hero, as Patroklos refers to the στυγερὴ κήρ which was allotted to him at birth and which has opened its jaws to devour him (*Il.* 23.78-79). The fact that he is well remembered is not mentioned, and we have no sense that it gives the dead man any comfort.

[45] Janko 1992 pp.420-421

It should be noted, however, that there are scenes in which heroes do speak about war and the injuries that ensue, describing it in biological terms typical of the narrator/focalizer. An example of this is *Il.* 11.655-664, in which Nestor laments the physical injuries of various Greeks. Interestingly, however, although he does describe their conditions in biological terms, it must be noted that the men in question are only injured, not dead or necessarily even dying (although the latter is a distinct possibility for the near future). When Nestor moves on to relate battle sequences in which death has occurred, he names it more often than he describes it (e.g. *Il.* 11.671-672), and when he does describe it (e.g. *Il.* 11.741-742), he does so with much less graphic detail than we would expect to find in a death described by the narrator/focalizer. It may also be argued that characters at times discuss the damage done to the body of a foe, which is deemed desirable (see Achilles on Hektor), while they will not do so with respect to comrades or companions. A hero does not wish to contemplate his own men being rendered as carrion, although this is acceptable for enemies.

When one considers the warrior speeches already mentioned, one finds that in general they contradict the actions of the heroes who speak them, or they contradict the speeches of other non-heroic characters, or they contradict what the narrative passages show us to happen. Hektor makes several heroic speeches, and ends up fleeing for his life around Troy. Achilles makes similar speeches, only to change his mind later. Sarpedon makes a speech that mimics the argument put forward by Achilles for *not* dying in battle, while Idomeneus criticizes being wounded from behind, although numerous heroes in the poem do in fact meet their deaths in this manner. Considering the length of the poem, it is remarkable that there are only a handful of pro-heroic speeches to be found throughout.

The narrator may understand and sympathize with his heroes, but at the same time he surely stands apart from the world he creates for his narratee/focalizees, and he comments upon and evaluates the values of that world. The issues posed by the poem, and the structure of the poem itself, are indeed complex, and the poet plays with the opposing forces that drive men as they meet their end, whether it be bravely or with cowardice. Redfield sums up these opposing forces:

> Nature is eternal; the things of culture are transient. But from another point of view it is also true that the creatures of nature are ephemeral, while the institutions of culture–its families, cities, traditions–are in principle immortal. They will survive as long as the generations of men maintain them. Culture therefore confers on finite life a meaning; it offers a man something to live for, something beyond himself.
>
> But culture does not thereby redeem a man from death. Rather it imposes on him the burden of choice. Society asks of a man much more than he can do; when some paths are chosen, others are rejected. At the moment of death much remains undone. Thus culture, precisely because it offers purposes to life, shows each life in itself as incomplete. In culture, in his relations with others, man encounters his own mortality. However much he lives for others, he must always fail them in the end.[46]

Thus it is that the narratee/focalizee is always presented with the ideal of heroic death, and with questions concerning its application. Ideology and terror both war within the hero for control. Status within society and obligations to kin are not always compatible; cultural renderings of death mean little in light of the biological reality of the cessation of the life of the body, and the notions of death which heroes entertain and name to one another stand distinctly apart from the nameless occurrences of death for which men are never prepared and cannot know, even in the experience of dying. Death as a notion and death as a fact are explored side by side by the poet. The notion gives shape and meaning to the fact, yet the fact must always undermine the lack of knowledge behind the notion.

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[46] Redfield 1975 p.126.

Chapter 5

Denial and Affirmation: Loathing of Death and the Heroic Ideal

The poem deals with the complexity of heroic death, presenting to the audience an idealized, remote death, and a physical, very much present death. Idealized death belongs to the members of the society the poem portrays. It is a mask laid over the featureless face of death, making it to some extent recognizable and providing the illusion that it can be mastered. It stands in stark contrast with death as it strikes unpredictably, death which is universal, physical, and removed from the ideology *to which the poem's heroes subscribe*. Biological death has no identity, no motives, no intent; it is merely a fact inherent in the very act of living that living must necessarily imply the possibility of its opposite, not living. Biological death is random, and hence, terrifying.

The narrator of the *Iliad* is always present as primary narrator/focalizer in the text, making clear that there is a death of which the characters have no concept, lurking just beneath the veneer of civilization. This death cannot be represented in any way (note p. 20 of chapter one, wherein a Near Eastern precedent for this is argued). Nobody knows when death will strike or what form it will take and it is the ultimate unknowable because in experiencing it one loses the capacity to experience. The poem thus works on two levels at once, portraying the emotional detachment of aristocratic idealism towards death, and the physical trauma of death for the individual. The objective and subjective experience are always represented, side by side and intertwined, yet distinguished from one another by the text's narrative structure.

However, the complexity of the *Iliad's* narrative structure has at times been overlooked. Coleridge stated "There is no subjectivity in Homer" while Fränkel remarked "A more general characteristic of the Homeric style, [is] the restrained objectivity and aristocratic withdrawness". Similarly Auerbach wrote "[There is in Homer] never a gap, never a glimpse of unplumbed depths. And this procession of phenomena takes place in the foreground–that is, in a local and temporal present which is absolute".[1] Such approaches to the poem work on certain levels, addressing various important aspects of the text, but equally important too, must surely be the matter of the poem as a work of art, devised with great skill and literary judgment.

The narrator, as the primary focalizer, sets the background layer of meaning upon which all that the characters say, do or feel is overlaid. Formally the characters are secondary focalizers, although they do at times act as an embedded voice for the primary narrator/focalizer. This is not uncommon for the poem's non-heroic characters, and there are clear cases in which even heroes may fill this role. Achilles begins the poem as a secondary narrator/focalizer, and becomes one with the primary narrator/focalizer part way through.

To understand why this should be the case, it is useful to consider carefully the heroic voice. For the time being, we therefore focus on this 'foreground', that has been the subject of so much modern scholarship. In this chapter, we attempt to engage the perspective of the heroic characters (specifically Achilles) more fully, considering the values of the heroic system, and its implicit world view.

Epic is by definition a narrative genre, as Aristotle says in his *Poetics*, 1449b 11. Yet even if the poem lacked narrative passages altogether, contrary to the nature of epic as this would be, the audience would still find much contradictory evidence concerning attitudes towards death in the portions of the poem that would remain. Certainly heroes boast of their commitment to the ideal (see for example Meriones in *Il.* 13.269-273). This does not imply, however, that the issues involved in heroic death are not complex for these characters, even though their perspective exists solely within a contrived cultural context which embraces the ideal.[2]

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[1] These quotes are assembled and cited by Griffin 1976 p. 161, wherein Griffin also makes the point that ancient scholarship may be called upon to redress the problems inherent in this modern belief in a nearly universal objectivity in Homer. He quotes Wilamowitz, on the subject of scholarship and its relationship to literary theory, pointing out that one may observe "Ancient literary theory, as always showing infinitely more comprehension for its own literature than does that of the moderns".

The heroes of the epic, aware of the inevitability of death, console themselves by attempting to achieve κλέος (the only sort of immortality they can obtain) by dying well. Nonetheless, they experience intense anxiety at the thought of dying, and typically refer to it in conjunction with negative epithets. Various character speeches make clear that in a perfect world, death would not be something that any of the heroes would choose for themselves. They choose to embrace the ideology of a heroic death only because, for those who are βροτοί, there is no alternative to dying. Faced with this incontrovertible fact, a 'good' death is preferable to a 'bad' one, as Sarpedon sums up to Glaukos (*Il.* 12.322-328). This in no way implies that death is ever anything less than loathsome and frightful. As N. Loraux writes, "There is not a single great warrior who has not one day felt terror quake throughout his whole being, as if fear were the hero's qualifying test."[3]

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[2] On the subject of the contrived cultural context, it is of value to cite Kirk 1976 p. 40, in which he points out "It is sometimes hard to resist the temptation of viewing the 'Homeric world' as a real one, possessing a simple historical value of its own. The truth is, of course, that the epic is to an important extent fictitious–more than that, it is fiction that contains contributions from different periods over a span of half a millennium or more."

[3] Loraux 1995 p. 75. She goes on to observe, "It is a surprising truth of the warrior's universe, where no matter how highly the ideology of valor is prized, it never overshadows the awareness that war and fear are linked...", p. 77. The thing that distinguishes the brave man and the coward, then, is not fear, for all men feel that, but the ability to judge the threat at hand realistically and react proportionately to it. There are instances in which brave men like Hektor will flee, but these should be distinguished from the frequent flights of a character such as Paris, whose fear is typically disproportionate to the situation (Loraux discusses this on p. 76). Another distinguishing characteristic of Paris is that he does not feel the anger appropriate to a warrior. As Van Wees 1992 says:

> Some men may never learn. Paris, for one, does not. When his brother Hektor finds him at home, while outside battle is raging, he assumes that Paris has retired from combat out of anger. Paris, however, explains that he is neither angry nor indignant: he is merely distressed (VI.326-36). As an adult, Paris still displays the 'childish' attitude of Telemakhos as a boy: his distress is not accompanied by anger, no doubt because he has "no sense" and is unconcerned with the "indignation" other people feel at his behaviour and the "many ugly things" they say about him (VI.349-53). Paris, one might say, is not properly socialised.

Paris is interesting within the Homeric context because he illustrates one very fundamental point about the social hierarchy. While is it impossible for a lowly man to advance to the rank of princes, it is possible for a prince to humiliate himself by his behaviour and be dishonoured in the eyes of his own peers. That is to say, the Homeric hierarchy is one in which one may fall below one's birth rank, but not one in which an individual may rise above it.

J. M Redfield remarks on these lines "To die for something, he says, is better than to die for nothing—and that is, after all, the alternative."[4] One cannot change the fact that one will die; one can only change how one will be remembered by those who come after. As mortals, our name and reputation are really the only meaningful things we have. For the hero, this is particularly true.

> All men are born to die, but the warrior alone must confront this fact in his social life, since he fulfills his obligations only by meeting those who intend his death. The community is secured by combat, which is the negation of community; this generates a contradiction in the warrior's role. His community sustains him and sends him to his destruction. On behalf of community he must leave community and enter a realm of force. The warrior can protect the human world against force only because he himself is willing to use and suffer force, "to work his own boast or submit to another's." The warrior stands on the frontier between culture and nature.[5]

We shall now consider, therefore, denial and affirmation of death within the heroic culture; that is, the death acceptance built into the foundation of the heroic ideal and the loathing of death which is paradoxically also very much present. These two opposing ideologies war within the warriors throughout the entire work. The *Iliad* emphasizes the internal, psychological conflict of the hero just as much as it does the external, physical conflict which is the backdrop for his personal tragedy. Not only does the poem show us two distinct deaths; it may be said that it shows us two distinct wars. The psychological war is in a number of ways the true subject of the poem, with the physical war acting as its impetus.

The focus of this chapter, as with the last one, is narratological. While chapter two dealt with the philological distinctions between death-terms, and chapter three addressed their use and avoidance, names for ideological death and descriptions of biological death are not the only relevant objects of focus in this study. Narratological treatment of death is also of major interest, and so chapter four moved on to consider the distinction between narrator-spoken and character-spoken text. While chapter four examined distinctions between voices, however, the present chapter will explore instances where narrator/character perspectives are not sequestered, and why this may be the case.

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[4] Redfield 1975 p. 101.
[5] Ibid. p. 101.

It is primarily to Achilles we turn in order to explore the internal conflicts of the Homeric heroes concerning death. Certainly, no other hero better exemplifies this struggle, and indeed the entire poem is a song about the very wrath which rends Achilles' convictions apart into two opposing camps of thought and feeling (Μῆνιν ἄειδε, θεά, Πηληϊάδεω ᾿Αχιλῆος / οὐλομένην (*Il.* 1.1-2, "Sing, Goddess, of the destructive wrath of Achilles, son of Peleus'). C. H. Whitman comments:

> The *Iliad* traces almost clinically the stages of Achilles' development. More than tragedy, epic makes real use of time; whereas Oedipus, for instance, reveals himself before our eyes, Achilles creates himself in the course of the poem. He progresses from young hopefulness, cheerfully accepting the possibility of early death with glory, through various phases of disillusion, horror, and violence, to a final detachment which is godlike indeed. Tragedy, especially that of Sophocles, slowly uncovers a character which is complete from start to finish, but Achilles is actually not complete until the poem is complete. He is learning all the time.[6]

On the subject of the opening of book 16 (lines 1-100):

> The whole tragic paradox of Achilles centers upon this scene, and in order to understand it, it is necessary to remember that the wrath of the hero is a search for himself which is complete only when the poem is complete. Achilles' will, which appears so fixed and single, is actually not fully formulated. The wish for life, which he revealed in the *Embassy*, is now a little more attenuated, but it is still with him, and the conflict within him is intense. For mortal man, the will to be absolute entails, however unrecognized, the will to die, and a life-wish obscures it. In the sixteenth book, Achilles tries to preserve both sides of his will, both human and divine, both life and the absolute, and such a volitional split may, perhaps, be deemed a weakness.[7]

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[6] Whitman1958 p. 187-188.

[7] Ibid, p. 197.

The μῆνις of Achilles, then, if we may indeed identify it with his 'search for himself' (or at the very least, with the cause for his 'search for himself'), is vital to his denial and acceptance of death, and this in turn is vital to his relationship with the narrative perspective. However, as is the case with death terminology, the Homeric poet has at his disposal a number of terms for denoting anger. The same problems of synonymy apply, and one must guard against making any facile assumptions that μῆνις as it appears in the *Iliad* is directly translatable as the English word 'wrath'. As L. Meullner points out, with reference to his own work:

> This book began with an assumption that terms for emotions such as anger have meanings and resonance that are specific to their culture, so that it could be informative to reconstruct the sense of an epic word such as *mênis* within its own poetic context. By now it is clear that this highly specialized social term denoting the cosmic sanction against tabu behavior is a far cry from any shared, secular notion of anger specific to contemporary Western culture. [8]

It is not the purpose of this study to explore the multiple ramifications of this particular word. Suffice it to say for our present purposes, that whatever else μῆνις may be, it is the force that motivates all of Achilles' actions, and it results from his sense of injustice, with Agamemnon specifically, and with the heroic code, mortality and fate as a whole. Achilles' μῆνις places him in a position in which he must re-evaluate his acceptance of death, and this raises questions which, once posed, have no easy resolution. Whitman comments,

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[8] Meullner 1996 p. 133. Interestingly, Meullner also seeks to establish that the *Theogony* is some kind of prologue to the *Iliad*, and that the μῆνις of Zeus, which is rightly featured in Hesiod's poem about the birth of the gods, is naturally replaced in Homer by the μῆνις of Achilles, since the epic is the song dedicated to the κλέα ἀνδρῶν, pp. 94-95. The word's religious connotations have been debated, and although Whitman 1958 casually refers to μῆνις as Achilles' 'search for himself', a more philological and in-depth treatment of the word is certainly required. Considine 1966 explores the etymology of μῆνις and refutes the claims of Irmscher ("Götterzorn bei Homer") and Frisk ("MHNIΣ: Zur Geschichte eines Begriffes"), that the noun μῆνις and the related verb μήνιω are primarily religious words, used of the anger of the gods. As he points out, in the *Iliad*, the μῆν root appears twenty-seven times, and seventeen of those uses refer to human wrath as opposed to divine, (pp. 16-17). Moreover, he argues that it is unreasonable to make the claim that heroes are 'almost' gods, and hence can be said to possess μῆνις without altering its status as a religious word, since the entire poem very much emphasises the *mortality* of the heroes, the very thing which separates them irreconcilably from the ἄμβροτοι, p. 19. Whatever its original sense, it is clear that by the time the *Iliad* is composed, μῆνις is a word well situated within the mortal context, and need not be read as *necessarily* possessing religious overtones.

> The Wrath of Achilles had probably been an epic subject for generations when Homer found it, and the germ of its meaning, the conflict between personal integrity and social obligation, must always have been inherent. But Homer's development of the theme squeezes the last drop of psychological and metaphysical meaning out of old material...Homer approaches the matter as an insolubly tragic situation, the tragic situation *par excellence*.[9]

In the speeches of and concerning this one central character, we find ample evidence of ambivalence towards the 'good' death, without any need to look to the outside, narrative voice. The foreground of Achilles' 'temporal present which is absolute', supplies material for the consideration of the subject of heroic death, for as Muellner says, "...Achilles bequeaths to us the self-perpetuating artistic representation of an idealistic, disturbing, and consoling definition of the human condition."[10] Thus, we now consider the subject of Achilles' journey of self-discovery and his shifting perspective on death.

Achilles is the ἄριστος ᾿Αχαιῶν (in the accusative case in *Il.* 1.244, 412, 16.274). He is more lethal in battle than any of his comrades, stronger, swifter and more beautiful. Yet, although in many ways he typifies within his own person all the heroic virtues which are found singly in other heroes, and although he is very much a product of the heroic world, he is at the same time more than any other character in the poem conscious of his destiny. He is, as he is well aware, ὠκυμορώτατος (*Il.* 1.417, 505.) Foreknowledge of this fact, granted by his mother Thetis, allows him to consider fully the implications of his choice of early death with imperishable glory. Mythological elements of his story, wherein invulnerability and immortality appear, are absent, and emphasis is placed instead on Achilles' greatness in the face of his impending death. This is important, for although Achilles greatly exceeds the excellence of the other heroes, he is not different from them in the components of his physical or psychological make-up, and this allows the focus of attention to be his humanity and mortality, as opposed to his semi-divine status.

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[9] Whitman 1958 p. 182.

[10] Muellner 1996 p. 175.

In fact, although his mother is a goddess, Thetis' appearances in the poem do nothing more than remind the audience of Achilles' approaching death (in the first book alone we find three such examples in *Il.* 1.351-356, *Il.* 1.413-418 and *Il.* 1.503-506). Her power is contrasted with her inability to change her son's destiny, and her own immortality is constantly juxtaposed with her child's fate to die.

Although Achilles, as the offspring of a goddess and as the possessor of what *may* be a Zeus-like capacity for μῆνις, differs from other men in his relationship to the divine, and although divine knowledge of the personal fate which is denied to most humans has been imparted to him, he remains first and foremost a mortal. As a mortal, Achilles must cast his lot with the world of mortals, and therefore accept that the only immortality open to him lies in human memory via the epic song. As a mortal who possesses more than mortal knowledge of his own fate, however, he is in a unique position to weigh and articulate his attitude towards dying. While the poem's narrative passages and the speeches of other heroes are also used to explore the theme of mortality throughout the poem, no other elements manage to do so with the clarity and poignancy which we find in the passages in which Achilles seeks to explore his choices about death.

This brings us to a key point about Achilles, and one which serves to distinguish him from the other heroes. In knowing more concerning his own death than a mortal character within the poem would know in ordinary circumstances, Achilles is self-aware of his role as a character in the drama as it unfolds. Redfield writes the following concerning heroes in general, but what he says is especially true in the case of Achilles:

> They are in the position of characters in a play who are aware that they are characters in a play and have been told how the play comes out. The effect is fascinating precisely because it is self-contradictory. They cannot stop being characters in a play, and they cannot stop doing what characters do, namely, making free choices and discovering the consequences. It makes no difference to their activity if they realize that, from the author's point of view, their free choices are determined by the needs of the plot and point toward a predetermined conclusion. Knowledge of fate (since it is knowledge of what cannot be otherwise) is by definition useless knowledge; it adds a dimension of awareness to characters who can do nothing with it in practice.
>
> There is a paradox here which comes to the surface whenever the characters imagine that they could, after all, make the poem come out in some other way. Such imaginings are frequent in the earlier parts of the poem; they drop away as the action gains momentum.[11]

Achilles possesses more than a hero's knowledge, and this places him on an entirely different level than his fellow warriors. In fact, Achilles possesses what would typically be only the *narrator's* knowledge. In having knowledge that places him on par with the narrator, Achilles himself dwells ouside of the boundaries of his current situation, the war in general, and even the poem. In his role as a character who knows he is a character, he operates much as the primary narrator/focalizer, and it would not be unreasonable to refer to him as the sub-primary narrator/focalizer or the pseudo-primary narrator/focalizer.

Semi-divinity aside, there are other, more subtle points of departure between Achilles and his comrades. Unlike the Trojans, who are depicted in their home settings, within the cultural context of their societal and kin relationships, the Greeks are isolated, far from home and removed from their individual and collective contexts. Few of the Greeks are depicted in private moments and, Agamemnon and Menelaos notwithstanding, only Achilles is clearly drawn as he conducts his personal relationships, whether it be with Thetis, Briseis, Patroklos, or the aged Phoinix.[12] For these characters he expresses tenderness and concern, and this helps to make him, for the audience, a much more fully developed character in terms of his humanity, rather as Hektor's scenes with Andromache and Astyanax serve to orient him within the human context of feeling and heighten audience sympathy for his fate. There is more pathos generated by and for Achilles, for this specific reason, than there is by and for any other Greek in the poem. The audience has ample time to come to know him as an individual, even as he comes to understand himself and his place in the world.

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[11] Redfield 1975 pp. 133-134. Contra Nilsson 1967 p. 168, in which he points out that the hero's ability to act ὑπὲρ μόρον both appeals to the mortal's delight in his own sense of strength, and serves to free the gods from the responsibility for human misfortunes.

[12] Ibid, p. 97.

Yet, in part, it is his close, personal feeling of connection for other human beings (Briseis to some degree and Patroklos more specifically), which ultimately isolates him from the rest of humanity.[13] Grief initiating with the removal of Briseis and culminating with the death of Patroklos sets Achilles apart from the daily life and concerns of other men, and it is only when he encounters another as alienated as he is (by grief, if not by outrage), that he finally regains his sense of human solidarity.

The audience is denied a first-hand encounter with Achilles as he existed before his quarrel with Agamemnon. The poem opens with an account of the first cause of his μῆνις, and all that Achilles is driven to become in the poem is a direct result of this force. Therefore, since his μῆνις is his cause for his ambivalence towards heroic death, we must ask what Achilles' attitude towards heroic death was prior to Agamemnon's outrage. One assumes that it was the same as the attitude expressed by the other heroes of the poem, and that originally Achilles himself embraced the ideology of the typical Homeric warrior. After all, he has come to Troy to win glory, knowing his two fates full well, namely, that if he fights he will die young, while if he avoids the war, he will live to an old age (*Il.* 9.410-416).[14]

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[13] It is worth noting at this point that, although he is very much distressed by the insult done to his τιμή when Agamemnon takes Briseis (as seen in ἦ γάρ μ' 'Ατρεΐδης εὐρὺ κρείων 'Αγαμέμνων / ἠτίμησεν· ἑλὼν γὰρ ἔχει γέρας αὐτὸς ἀπούρας *Il.* 1.355-356, 'But now the wide-ruling son of Atreus, Agamemnon, / has dishonoured me, for seizing and taking my prize, he himself keeps it'), Achilles also experiences feelings of personal loss, (see *Il.* 9.335-343). The removal of Briseis *is* undoubtedly an insult, but it is compounded by a sense of grief owing to a personal attachment. These lines demonstrate clearly a strong link in Homeric thought between the notion of what is 'dear' or 'beloved' and what is 'one's own'. For this reason, a very common adjective used to denote possession is φίλος. However, it is also worth noting that Achilles rejects the offer of Briseis' return in *Il.* 9.646-655. Personal loss in this matter is clearly not *as* devastating as the loss of τιμή. Briseis may be restored, but τιμή cannot be. In light of the insult, Briseis is now worth less than she formerly was, for she is first and foremost plunder, and she is viewed primarily as a possession, whose value may be debased by mistreatment at the hands of another. Achilles no longer wants her, even though he is given assurances that she has not been made Agamemnon's bed companion (*Il.* 9.132-134). Her perspective on the matter, it hardly needs saying, does not come into it. It is impossible to imagine Achilles treating Patroklos in such a manner. Although Homeric society certainly makes a great distinction between the status of men and women and we must be careful to avoid making judgments based on modern standards, it seems safe to say that one should not classify the personal loss that Achilles feels over Briseis as being on the same level or possessing the same degree of intensity as the personal loss that he feels over Patroklos. The two griefs really do belong in entirely separate categories, as each relationship exists only within the emotional boundaries deemed possible by Homeric society for that type of relationship.

Achilles at this point likely possesses the same stoic (in its modern vernacular sense) point of view on dying as does Hektor, who tells Andromache not to lament, because he will not die before it is apportioned for him to do so (*Il.* 6.487). He has chosen, and he has come to Troy to die. Death claims all who are mortal, and the hero must transform the experience into something over which he can have mastery. Achilles embraces the view that death is the ultimate opponent, which, in the act of conquering, is also conquered and overcome, never to be an unrealized, looming threat again. Many centuries later, a similar longing for death as a worthy adversary finds expression in the work of the English poet John Donne, who says "I would not that death should take me asleep. I would not have him meerly seise me, and onely declare me to be dead, but win me, and overcome me.[15]

Heroic death commits the youthful, beautiful body of the hero to the funeral pyre, never to be corrupted by the forces of old age, illness or decay. It is something experienced and transcended. This preoccupation with avoiding decay by dying young in battle has a well-founded lineage.[16]

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[14] West 1997 notes that these lines may echo a distant motif associated with the story of Gilgamesh. As he says, "Gilgamesh, we may say, was the king who wanted eternal life but could not have it, while on the other hand he did win exceptional fame and glory, which is represented as some sort of compensation. If this was the original source of Achilles' alternative fate, we have only to assume that *eternal* life (out of the question for the humanized hero of the *Iliad*) has been replaced by a *long life*, and that the dichotomy between this and glory has been dramatized into a choice" (pp.372-373).

[15] John Donne, Letter, Sept. 1608 (published in *Complete Poetry and Selected Prose*, ed. by John Hayward, 1929). For more on death as the ultimate adversary, see Clarke 1999 pp. 243-253.

[16] Along similar lines, in column four of tablet seven of the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, we hear the dying Enkidu, wasting away with a horrific flesh corrupting illness, say to his companion :

Like the heroes of earlier, non-Greek epic, Achilles has followed the warrior ethic and sought the Greek ideal of the 'beautiful death'. He will therefore be spared the horrors of old age and illness, and will be fixed forever at the height of his perfection. To quote Vernant, "Dedicated from the outset–one might say by nature–to a beautiful death, he goes through life as if he were already suffused with the aura of the posthumous glory that was always his goal. That is why he finds it impossible, in applying the code of honor, to negotiate, to compromise, to yield to circumstance or power relations..."[17]

It seems reasonable to me to term the acceptance and purposeful pursuit of the 'beautiful death' on the part of the hero as active dying, for it is the death the warrior embraces in the vigorous prime of life, by choice and as an act of will, as opposed to the death which will slowly overtake him in old age when he is helpless and in a weakened condition, waiting for death to find him. Heroes, in their character speeches, *choose* active death in order that they may meet it, confront it, and through this act of will, conquer it and transcend it. Heroes very often (in the narrative reality), are *given* a passive death; that is, at the critical moment they back down from this ultimate opponent and flee in terror, only to be killed ignobly from behind. Their dying is no act of will; it does not transform them or allow them the final dignity of facing the moment of death, by choice, face on. They have obtained no more κλέος than the old man who wastes away in the confines his house, passively awaiting the moment to take him.[18]

> Oh Gilgamesh, some destiny has robbed me
> of the honour fixed for those who die in battle.
> I lie now in slow disgrace, withering day by day,
> deprived as I am of the peace that comes to one
> who dies suddenly in a swift clash of arms.

[17] Vernant 1991 p. 51.

[18] It is interesting to note that the vast majority of heroes who are killed from behind in the poem are Trojans, while relatively few Greeks die in this manner. In a Greek poem, this may be no more than a matter of patriotism on the part of the poet, although it is also possible that depictions of death (via a violent penetration by means of a weapon) overtaking the hero from behind may be an attempt to render

But let us return to the subject of what Achilles was like prior to the quarrel. We can glimpse something of his former character based on what other characters say about him. For example, we find an interesting account of his earlier behavior in a speech to Hektor by his wife, in which, although Achilles is the acknowledged slayer of her family, Andromache grudgingly admits that he conducted himself according to the warrior's code of honour (*Il.* 6.414-428).

We are also afforded a glimpse of what the pre-μῆνις Achilles must have been like when we consider the values he himself endorses *during* the quarrel. Indeed, he believes in the heroic code strongly enough to reprimand Agamemnon for breaking its ordinances by slighting a fellow warrior (*Il.* 1.225-230).

If Agamemnon will flout convention and insult Achilles, who is the best of warriors, then social order is overturned and the heroic code has been contravened. Achilles' reaction, not surprisingly, is to cease to feel obliged to hold to the rules which others blatantly ignore. In stripping him of his portion of honour (in the tangible form of the girl Briseis), Agamemnon has committed a socially untenable act, and Achilles' only

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him like a subjugated woman, for in Greek art, it is very common to depict sexual acts with women as involving penetration from the rear, while intercourse among men is typically depicted as occurring face to face. In Greek art, face to face intercourse implies mutual respect and the potential for equal status, while intercourse from behind occurs between partners who are not social equals and have no potential to become so. For details on this, see Dover 1978 pp. 91-109. Heroes who meet death looking their opponents in the face have their respect. The killing of such a hero not only boosts the κλέος of the victim, but also that of the victor over such a worthy opponent. Death from behind is merely humiliating and undignified for the victim, and brings little κλέος to the victor, who was not equally matched in his prowess. The rendering of the Trojans as subjugated women should not really be very surprising at all, since the Greeks tend to envision the very city under siege (in this case Troy) as a woman being penetrated and conquered (hence, the innermost, sacred center of the city is typically crowned with a shrine to an inviolable virgin goddess Athena. The hope seems to be that the patron goddess' virgin status may prevent penetration of the city. It is also worth noting that the Amazons fight on the side of the Trojans, and that this alliance with female warriors sets Troy apart from the 'civilized' world of masculine combat and Greek societal norms. The Amazons are a favourite mythological symbol (especially in the fifth century B.C.) for all that is un-Greek and hence, barbaric and in need of subjugating. All that is monstrous is typically feminine in Greek mythology, and all that is feminine in Greek society is typically viewed as being unruly, irrational and in need of subjugation in general.

recourse is to withdraw from all matters even peripherally connected to Agamemnon's sphere of interest. He expresses these intentions clearly (*Il.* 1.223-244).[19]

Within the context of the heroic code it is vital for a warrior to be quick to anger so that he might ensure that no one abuses him lightly. To be a victim is to be a 'bad man'.[20] Achilles is right and just in his decision to make Agamemnon suffer. However, Achilles hasn't merely withdrawn his services until such time as Agamemnon might feel the need to propitiate him; Achilles has no intention of rejoining the war at all until it becomes a matter of defending his own personal property (*Il.* 9.650-653). After all, in exchange for honour, the hero risks his life, the most valuable thing he possesses. If there is no χάρις and duty will not be repaid with respect, then there is no cause for performing duty. As J. M. Redfield says, "Heroism presumes a reciprocity between hero and community."[21] Moreover, "...heroism is for Homer a definite social task, and the heroes are a definite social stratum. The name is given to those who are, have been, or will be warriors. This is the Homeric governing class, the propertied class, and also the class on which the burden falls of maintaining the community." [22] He continues:

> But as the community's need of warriors generates a social organization, it generates also a paradox. War is initially an unhappy necessity, the precondition of protected community. But as the warriors become a class or caste, the advantages– and more important, the prestige–of the warrior become in themselves desirable. War thus acquires for the warrior a certain positive value. Heroism is initially a social task; it then becomes a definite set of virtues associated with the performance of this task. The warrior's virtues, further, entitle him to claim a social status. But he can claim that status only if he can show that he has the virtues...[23]

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[19] Van Wees 1992 explores the nature of Homeric τιμή and its manifestation in the form of material possessions in detail. He also explores the nature of anger and agression in Homeric society as a whole (see chapters 5 and 6).

[20] Ibid. p. 65, quoting Adkins, "To be *kakos* is to be the sort of person to whom [harm] may be done with impunity..."

[21] Redfield 1975 p. 103.

[22] Ibid, p. 99.

[23] Ibid, p. 100.

This is the social structure demonstrated by Sarpedon's words to Glaukos (*Il.* 12.310-321).

Achilles has demonstrated amply the required heroic virtues, and understandably, he expects the status that is commensurate with them. The insult done to Achilles' sense of τιμή has created a significant crisis of faith for him, not so much in Agamemnon or his cause specifically, as in the entire heroic code, in which a man fights to win honour, and yet can be forced to stand by and watch himself be unjustly robbed of that honour. To quote Vernant, "Achilles' refusal highlights the tension between ordinary honor, the societal approval necessary for self-definition, and the much greater demands of heroic honor, in which one still needs to be recognized, but now as set apart on another level, to be famed 'among men to come.'"[24] As a result, οὔτε ποτ᾽ εἰς ἀγορὴν πωλέσκετο κυδιάνειραν / οὔτε ποτ᾽ ἐς πόλεμον, ἀλλὰ φθινύθεσκε φίλον κῆρ / αὖθι μένων, ποθέεσκε δ᾽ ἀϋτήν τε πτόλεμόν τε (*Il.* 1.490-492, 'He would not ever go to the assembly where men win honour, nor to battle, but remaining there he continued to waste away his own heart, although he desired the clamour and conflict').[25]

Because of this crisis of faith, Achilles later rejects the embassy from Agamemnon (*Il.* 9.646-655). In heroic society, a man's τιμή is directly measured in terms of his material possessions and the gifts he receives and/or wins. Agamemnon's generous offer of recompense should more than make up for his original λώβη.[26] Odysseus expects that it will, laying the emphasis upon the material aspect of the quarrel (*Il.* 9.225-227).

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[24] Vernant 1991 p. 55.

[25] It is noteworthy that it is the ἀγορή, rather than the πόλεμος which is described as κυδιάνειρα. Elsewhere, the adjective is used only in conjunction with a word for battle (μάχη), as we see in *Il.* 4.223-226, *Il.* 12.322-325, *Il.* 13.266-271, and *Il.* 14.153-156.

Although πόλεμος is not the word for battle which is used elsewhere in conjunction with κυδιάνειρα, the fact that the two words appear so close together immediately calls to mind the usual association between battle and the winning of glory.

[26] On the subject of Agamemnon's outrage, Schein 1984 says "In robbing him, Agamemnon has violated the normal social 'code' to which everyone in the poem would subscribe, according to which bravery and excellence in battle win wealth, honor, and glory, and thus endow life with meaning... " p. 100. Agamemnon himself later acknowledges the folly of his actions, saying ὦ γέρον, οὔ τι ψεῦδος ἐμὰς

However, because of his heightened awareness of his own mortality, Achilles possesses an awareness of the honour due to him (see again *Il.* 1.351-354). Once his honour is offended, there is no appeasing him thereafter. Agamemnon ceases to be in the wrong, as Achilles breaks with the dictates of his own culture when he rejects the peace offering. From the heroic perspective, Achilles becomes at this point the 'other', something removed from the conventions which govern 'normal' social interactions. In every real sense, he is no longer part of Greek society at all. Even those who are closest to him are disturbed by his obstinacy, as we see in speeches by both Phoinix (*Il.* 9.485-501) and later by Patroklos (*Il.* 16.30-35).

Achilles must step back from the society which has created him in order to re-evaluate its views on death. This is the very thing which originally separates him from other men, including those to whom he is closest, and it is only in the act of distancing himself from other mortals that he can fully come to appreciate issues relating to his own mortality. Mortality is the very thing he shares with the rest of humankind, yet Achilles cannot explore the ramifications of his individual impending death so long as he remains part of a collective dedicated to dying well unquestioningly. What separates him from humanity is the very thing which he shares with it. As I have already attempted to establish, the difference in attitude (as compared with that of other heroes) that Achilles exhibits is attributable to his special, narrator-like knowledge, and he reflects a narrator-like perspective because of this.

Van Wees argues that modern audiences misdirect their attentions when they focus on Achilles' alienation from the rest of humanity. He writes, "Ancient audiences, I believe, would have understood the epics as stories of anger and revenge, not of alienation, death and justice—and they would have found the poems no less fascinating and meaningful for it."[27] Certainly, the wrath of Achilles is the central theme of the

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ἄτας κατέλεξας· / ἀασάμην, οὐδ' αὐτὸς ἀναίνομαι. (*Il.* 9.115-116, 'Old man, you did not speak a falsehood concerning my madness, / I was mad, and I myself do not deny it.)

[27] Van Wees 1992 p. 126

poem, and his quest for revenge is paramount. Indeed it can be argued that Achilles does not reject the embassy because he has found a new morality that transcends the materialistic scale of values, but because he is simply too angry about being publicly dishonoured (Van Wees, p. 133). Nonetheless, if issues concerning alienation were not meant to be considered, it is difficult to understand the emphasis placed on the reconciliation scene between Priam and Achilles, wherein the alienation imposed by grief is finally broken down. If the issue of death was not intended to provoke powerful audience response, it seems peculiar that so many striking remarks are made concerning it.

It is in his answer to the embassy that we find some of Achilles' most remarkable comments on death. Besought to return to battle and make the Achaians forceful again, Achilles answers negatively (*Il.* 9.308-327 and *Il.* 9.401-408).

No other hero, Greek or Trojan, actually manages to call so directly into question the value of heroic death. Achilles explores issues which, were he simply a secondary narrator/focalizer, it would not even be possible for him to conceive. He can see himself as standing apart from his culture, and he can accept that the conduct accepted as normal for that culture may not actually be an absolute value. It is as if seeing convention dishonoured by Agamemnon has for the first time made him aware of this possibility. He realizes that men could choose to do things differently, and that it is men who invent culture rather than vice-versa. He imagines an alternative, another societal norm, or anti-norm (the standards of which he may be free to determine for himself). His speech marks a point of incredible psychological awakening which spawns an awareness of self as an individual capable of personal choice. P. Vernant says, Achilles' dishonour at the hands of Agamemnon has changed everything, and "Heroic action is thus stripped of its function as an absolute criterion..."[28] J. M. Redfield says of Achilles, "Achilles has, as it were, been pushed over the edge; he looks back at culture from the outside. He becomes a social critic, even a satirist."[29] This is the role of the narrator of the *Iliad* himself, and again we are reminded of Achilles' unusual status. Redfield is also prompted to remark upon the Homeric hero's ability to perceive himself with surprising awareness of his cultural context with reference to Sarpedon's speech in *Il.* 12.310-328, and he says of this, reminding us that the hero wages one war within himself and one on the battlefield:

> The greatness of Homer's heroes is a greatness not of act but of consciousness. There is not much nobility in the act of war, which is in itself a negation of human things, barbaric and impure. But there is a nobility in men's capacity to act and at the same time comprehend themselves and their situation. Homer's heroes have the power to step back and conceive themselves, suspended between culture and nature, as godlike and mortal.[30]

But Achilles is a man who is discordant with his time, and his own realizations are not enough to spark any significant intellectual revolution among his comrades and fellow princes. Thersites speaks up concerning Agamemnon's outrage, and voices the opinion that Achilles has been too calm in his reaction, but his opinion and support matter not at all (*Il.* 2.211-277). Thersites is a lowly man, as is indicated by his physical repugnance, and that he is κακός is demonstrated clearly by Odysseus' successful attempts to bully him into silence. He has no share of a warrior's excellence, he is neither a prince nor a 'good man'. He is certainly not an equal of Achilles, and it is pointed out that of all men present, Achilles himself hates Thersites the most. Thersites is in the habit of ignoring his place in the very rigid social order of the Greek camp, speaking out against those to whom he should bow, and Achilles' cause is nothing more than a convenient excuse for him to put himself forward to make a speech. He is an opportunist, and when he is silenced by Odysseus, there is great approval voiced by the crowd of onlookers.

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[28] Vernant 1991 p. 54.
[29] Redfield 1975 p. 103.
[30] Ibid, pp. 101-102.

Achilles' freedom of choice is an illusion, given that there is no viable social alternative in existence to which he may turn. In Greek thought, humans are radically different from other animals, and are by virtue of civilization inescapably alienated from the natural world. Humans very much belong in a human context, interconnected by a web of societal and kin relationships which orient each individual in the κόσμος, the πόλις and the οἶκος. No man can strike out on his own, and continue to live cut off from human society, and so, Achilles cannot reject the cloak of his humanity altogether. He attempts to do so for the bulk of the poem, but eventually he must, if he is to live the time he has left, return to human society. However, it cannot be exagerated just how extraordinary it is for a Homeric hero to reject his own societal norms, or even to be able to *conceive* of doing so in his imagination.

S. Schein comments on this remarkable speech:

> Lines 318 and 320 lack the connective conjunctions which normally coordinate clauses in Homeric verse. This striking syntactical harshness calls attention to these lines by setting them off from the smooth flow of the speech up to this point. When examined more closely, they signify a radical break from the heroic value system prevalent elsewhere in the poem.
>
> When Achilles says
>
> > There is an equal share for the one who stays back and if someone fights strongly;
> > in a single honor are both the coward and the brave man,
>
> he is contradicting the notion of honor he himself in Book 1 held strongly enough to quarrel over and to which everyone else in the poem subscribes. Achilles has just realized (9.316-17) that there is after all no "gratitude and recompense" (*charis*) for his fighting, as there should be according to the "code"; he responds by actually misusing the word "honor" (*time*) in a way that implies a non-acceptance of the normal value system and suggests a groping toward some other that does not exist anywhere in the world of the poem and is no real alternative. As A. Parry has pointed out, Achilles' misuse of language enhances his tragedy; even linguistically he cannot "leave the society which has become so alien to him," or rather, from which he has alienated himself.[31]

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[31] Schein 1984 p. 106. His quote from A. Parry comes from p. 7 of "The Language of Achilles." *TAPA* 87 (1956), pp. 1-7.

When Achilles continues,

> > The man who does nothing and the man who has done much die alike,
>
> he is no longer misusing language, but he implies that just as, in fact, honor really has nothing to do with desert, so glory after death will be the same regardless of one's achievements...Achilles is led away from a hero's usual preoccupation with what he can do or win to a most atypical, but characteristically Achillean consideration of what he *can't* do: both live to old age and win imperishable glory (9.410-16). In effect he is asking, "What is glory?" Achilles is the highest expression of quality in the world of the poem, but for him at this point there is no longer any quality left in the world, only the qualities that Agamemnon offers and the newly understood value system provides. He might as well go home.

Although Achilles refuses to reverse his decision once it is reached, strangely enough he nonetheless continues to urge Patroklos to participate in the war. He vacillates between contemplation of the honour which Patroklos might win in his name, and concern for his comrade's well being (*Il.* 16.80-100). Achilles mentions desiring once more the return of Briseis (line 85), although in book 9 he rejected this very offer (see footnote 13). He seems to be wavering from this former resolve, and yet his nihilistic sentiments in lines 97-100 show us that in other respects he still clings just as devoutly to his avowed μῆνις. He wills the destruction of both Trojans and Achaians, no longer making any distinction between comrades and enemies, except in the case of Patroklos. Like the well-drawn fully-developed human character that he is, Achilles has moments of both doubt and assuredness. He wavers in his convictions, and has not fully committed himself one way or the other. He remains in progress.

Achilles prays to Zeus to allow Patroklos to ward off the fires from the ships and return safely (*Il.* 16.233-48). However, in his typical fashion Zeus grants one part of the prayer and not the other. Patroklos achieves his objective, but of course is killed by Hektor in the process. The passage in which Achilles first learns of his bereavement demonstrates clearly the depth of his passion. So terrifying is the display of emotion, that

Antilochos fears that as the messenger of such news, his own throat may end up being cut (*Il.* 18.1-34).

Achilles is linked to the dead man in a number of ways in this passage, and is treated as though he were a corpse himself. The 'dark cloud of grief' we hear of in line 22, which covers him, is highly reminiscent of the 'dark cloud' we find in connection to terms for death in narrative passages (e.g. *Il.* 20.417-418). Achilles grasps the dust with his hands as he falls, as dying men are at various times described as doing (e.g. *Il.* 11.425, 13.508, 13.520, 14.452, and 17.315). The verb κεῖμαι in line 27 is typically used of warriors lying dead (e.g. *Il.* 18.20 of Patroklos, 23.210 and in 18.121 of Achilles himself). The slave women who lament around him in lines 30-31 are reminiscent of mourners around a bier, and it is as though they lament Achilles rather than Patroklos. Indeed, Achilles equates the death of Patroklos with his own to such a degree, that in some sense their identities seem to merge.[32]

As Whitman says on the subject of the psychological impact of the initial loss of Briseis and the subsequent loss of Patroklos, "...clearly it is the violation or loss of these loves which drives Achilles to the austere and fearful extremities which characterize him.[33]

It is fair to say that after the removal of Briseis, Achilles separates himself from his society. After the death of Patroklos, Achilles separates himself from the entire world of the living, symbolically becoming as one already dead himself. As S. Schein points out, "...after he learns of Patroklos' death at the beginning of Book 18, [he] becomes the constant focus of attention and is portrayed by Homer in the final seven books as qualitatively different from what he had been earlier in the poem."[34]

Furthermore, at this point he transfers his anger from Agamemnon to Hektor, and becomes "transformed, disestablished from his distinctive, generous humanity and heroism."[35] For Schein, this transformation occurs in three distinct phases. Firstly, Homer indicates Achilles' alienation from his earlier self by symbolically showing him as one dead, and hence less than fully human. Secondly, he portrays him as enacting the part of an extreme version of the conventional warrior-hero. Thirdly, he increasingly represents him as daemonic (in the sense of being not merely human) in his actions and values.[36]

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[32] Ibid, pp. 130-132.

[33] Whitman 1958 p. 187.

[34] Schein 1984 p. 89.

> ...he comes to be seen as both less than and more than human, both less than and more than his previous self; he can no longer be measured either by the same standards as other heroes or by his own previous standards. Only his eventual restoration of Hektor's body to Priam, whom he treats with regained humanity and compassion, marks his own restoration to his characteristic, Achillean self; but this reversal comes too late to affect the doom of Troy or of Achilles himself.[37]

Although killing Hektor will not compensate for Patroklos' death any more than the embassy from Agamemnon in book 9 could make recompense for lost τιμή, the Achilles of book 18 can focus on nothing else. Knowing Hektor's fate will seal his own (*Il.* 18.94-96), he nonetheless commits to avenging his companion, as he explains to his mother (*Il.* 18.79-85, 18.90-93, 18.98-116).

It is in this state of extreme emotional dislocation, from which Achilles is unable to value the lives of others or show any reverence for the social conventions which traditionally preside over the treatment of suppliants or corpses, that he re-commits himself to his original choice between the two fates open to him. The lives of others become meaningless to him, and his own impending demise, which had taken on such significance after Agamemnon insulted his honour, ceases to be a cause for internal debate.

Achilles begins at this point to liken himself to Herakles (*Il.* 18. 117-119). Herakles is the traditional type of warrior hero, belonging to an earlier time when heroes were both more powerful and crueler than the heroes of the generation of the *Iliad*. He is a hold over from the earliest mythologies, with all its more brutal elements, and he is very much the model upon which Achilles styles himself after the death of Patroklos. Despite Herakles' elevated degree of heroic achievement, however, he was mortal and he died. Although some versions of Herakles' mythology have him apotheosized after death, Homer makes no mention of it here (for that we must look to the *Odyssey* 11.601-604). The poet downplays Herakles' immortality just as he downplays mythological variations which focus on the immortality granted Achilles as the son of a goddess (the theme of the goddess seeking to bestow immortality upon her son/consort is common throughout mythology, from the *ȝst* and *ȝsỉr*[38] myth in Egypt to the Greek Selene and Endymion, Eos and Tithonos, and even Thetis dipping Achilles in the river Styx by the heel). If Homer were to mention Herakles' immortality here, it would undercut the similarity he is drawing between Herakles and Achilles, since Achilles has now recommitted himself to dying at Troy. As Schein puts it, "...it expresses eloquently Achilles' recognition of his own special greatness. It also sets a seal on his decision to die, since Herakles in the *Iliad*, for all his supreme heroism, is in the end nonetheless a mortal who died."[39]

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[35] Ibid, p. 128.
[36] Ibid, p. 128.

Achilles has learned the value of his life, and finally understanding his choice fully, he resolves to rejoin the battle and die, in order to avenge Patroklos. Once he has accepted his own death on these terms, he begins to devalue the lives of other characters, displaying a brutality formerly unknown. If Patroklos, who was in Achilles' mind superior to all other warriors, has died, then no man has a claim to life. What Achilles now accepts for himself, he deals out to others unremittingly, as we see in his interactions with Lykaon (*Il.* 21.97-113).

This new degree of solipsism marks a major point of departure from the earlier, compassionate Achilles, and serves to indicate his lack of empathy with the rest of humanity. This is the Achilles who promises vengance for the unburied corpse of

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[37] Ibid, p. 129.

[38] Isis and Osiris, as they are more commonly known today by their Greek names.

Patroklos (*Il.* 18.334-337), and this is the Achilles who commits twelve Trojans to the funeral fire as sacrificial offerings (23. 170-81). Although the ordering and holding of the funeral games show that Achilles is at least beginning to face the loss of Patroklos and is now willing to part with his corpse, and although the games themselves require some degree of human interaction, the sacrifice of the Trojans perverts the ceremony, and shows the audience how far Achilles still is from reconciling with humanity.

Achilles does not wish to share the communal meal of the Greeks prior to combat, and hence is not an integrated member of human society.[40] Until Patroklos is avenged and buried, Achilles is determined to join his comrade in his liminal state. Patroklos, as one of the unburied, is unable to participate in the world of the living or the dead. Achilles, as one who is as dead even as he lives, is likewise cut off from both realms. This foregoing of the pleasures of life is made clear by the words of Thetis to her child (*Il.* 24.128-130).[41]

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[39] Schein 1984 pp. 134-135.

[40] The sharing of a meal was regarded as one of the most fundamental socially unifying acts. Moreover, eating is among the things that are inseparable from living (as is looking upon the light of the sun). Physical needs and limitations are among the major things which separate mortals from immortals. A common way of referring to humans in Greek is to say 'those who eat bread' (bread being a staple of the Greek diet), σῖτον ἔδοντες, as is seen in *Od.* 9.89, in which Odysseus sends men out to discover who lives on the Island of the Lotus Eaters. He refers to them as 'eaters of bread', when in fact in *Od.* 9.84 we hear ἄνθινον εἶδαρ ἔδουσιν, (that is to say, they are not human at all; they are supernatural and quite outside of the bounds of human convention).

[41] Achilles' behaviour is highly reminiscent of that of Gilgamesh in Mesopotamian epic. Gilgamesh laments aloud for his departed friend Enkidu, saying:

> [I will lay you to rest] on a bed [of loving care]
> and will let you stay [in a restful dwelling, a
> dwelling on the left]
> Princes of the earth [will kiss your feet]
> I will make the people [of Uruk] weep for you,
> [mourn for you]
> [I will fill] the proud people with sorrow for
> you
> And I myself will neglect my appearance after
> you(r death)
> Clad only in a lionskin, I will roam the open
> country.

Zeus bids Athena to place divine nectar and ambrosia (typically forbidden to mortals) in Achilles' breast to ward off hunger, indicating clearly how great the rift between Achilles and humanity has become (*Il.* 19.340-348). Moreover, Achilles no longer cares for Agamemnon's gifts, nor for the formerly loved Briseis (*Il.* 19.59-60), and he laments to the absent Patroklos that all has ceased to have meaning (*Il.* 19.321-327).

This is the Achilles who wishes to cause groaning among the stricken widows (*Il.* 18.122-124) even as he himself is described as groaning and lamenting (*Il.* 23.225 and *Il.* 24.123). Achilles' μῆνις over the death of Patroklos will affect others in much the same way as his μῆνις over the outrage of Agamemnon affected him. Achilles' actions are shown to be both destructive and self-destructive.

Achilles begins his great slaughter of Trojans at *Il.* 20.381-382 and continues it until he kills Hektor in book 22. It has been remarked that between these two points in the poem, Achilles is the *only* warrior on either side to inflict a fatal wound, and these wounds are remarkable for their diversity as is the narrative pace in its intensity in focusing on Achilles' single mindedness of purpose. In book 20 alone Achilles kills fifteen Trojans in quick succession, while in book 21 he captures the twelve sacrificial victims he has promised to Patroklos and kills the suppliant Lykaon. The rapidity with which he dispatches fifteen Trojans dehumanises them, and the narrator spends little time on each victim in order to emphasise their lack of individual importance to Achilles. As for the twelve sacrifices, it hardly needs pointing out that historically the Greeks were not practitioners of human sacrifice. There may be some Bronze Age evidence for periodic human sacrifice on Crete, but this practice does not seem to have been wide spread, and by Homer's time had been superceded by animal sacrifice. The very notion of human sacrifice is considered abhorrent and uncivilized (and its appearance in myth typically signifies unusual circumstances). Men do not, in heroic society, behave in this way

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This English translation of the third column of tablet eight is taken from Dalley's 1989 edition, p. 93. The Assyrian version of the text is given by Thompson 1930, p. 49, and his notes on this passage appear on p.

towards other men. Social convention also prohibits the killing of suppliants, and Achilles flouts this moral imperative as well. The issues of respect and mercy have become irrelevant to him.

His original exploration of mortality and ensuing rejection of the heroic code serve to alienate him completely from the society which is built upon the very ideals in which he no longer believes. His resolution to face death after the loss of Patroklos serves to alienate him even further from all of humankind.

> ...Achilles is absorbed with thoughts of death: the death of Patroklos, of himself, of his father, even of his own son. His knowledge that nothing worse can happen to him sets him apart from everyone else in the *Iliad*. This alienation is more extreme than it was earlier in the poem, when he could share his wrathful isolation with Patroklos and envision bad news from home for both of them (*Il.* 16. 12-16). Homer's audience would rightly have expected the most terrible deeds of warfare from an Achilles who is so utterly cut off from the human community and who has nothing left to lose.[42]

Again, we may find a parallel for Achilles' attitude in the *Epic of Gilgamesh*. Gilgamesh tells Urshanabi, the ferryman of Utnapishtim,

> I am afraid of death, and so I roam the open country.
> The words of my friend weigh upon me.
> I roam open country for long distances; the words
> of Enkidu my friend weigh upon me.
> I roam open country on long journeys,
> How, O how could I stay silent, how, O how
> could I keep quiet?
> My friend whom I love has turned to
> clay: Enkidu my friend whom I love has turned to
> clay.
> Am I not like him? Must I lie down too,
> never to rise, ever again?[43]

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[42] Schein 1984 p.144.

[43] Dalley 1989 p.104

Achilles is between realms, displaced and unnatural. He has become an outsider to the order of the world.[44] This is revealed clearly by the fact that Achilles dies symbolically twice in the poem, when Patroklos and Hektor are both killed wearing the armour so closely connected to his identity.

The deaths of Hektor and Achilles are inextricably bound together. When Achilles chooses to kill Hektor, he knows he embraces his own fate. When Patroklos dies and leaves Achilles no reason to avoid his own death any longer, we know that Hektor must soon fall. Nevertheless, Hektor is not nearly so accepting of his fate as is the bereaved Achilles, and he flees in terror before his preternatural, pitiless and no longer fully human opponent. In answer to Hektor's requests (both before and after their combat) for an agreement on proper burial for the one to die, Achilles promises defilement (*Il.* 22.261-267) and expresses his desire to commit outrage (*Il.* 22.345-348). The real abuse of Hektor's corpse at the hands of Achilles seems almost kind by comparison (*Il.* 24.14-18).

Certainly, the dragging of the corpse before the eyes of the grieving widow and parents of the dead man must have been horrific to a Homeric audience, possessed of the belief in the need for proper burial to allow the ψύχη to become fully integrated into Hades' realm. The notion of the dislocated dead, trapped in between worlds is far more disturbing than the notion of a peaceful dissolution into near non-existence that is the proper due of the dead. Moreover:

> One kind of cruelty consists in defiling the bloody corpse with dust and in tearing his flesh, so that the enemy will lose his individual appearance, his clear set of features, his color and glamour; he loses his distinct form along with his human aspect, so that he becomes unrecognizable. When Achilles begins to abuse Hektor, he ties the corpse to his chariot to tear off its skin, by letting it–especially the head and the hair–drag on the ground in the dust... The reduction of the body to a formless mass, indistinguishable now from the ground on which it lies, not only eradicates

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[44] This is ironic, given that the shield of Hephaistos (described in *Il.* 18. 478-616), which is bestowed upon Achilles for the very purpose of allowing him to re-enter battle and kill Hektor depicts a well structured world. The shield represents a perfectly functioning κόσμος in miniature, and shows the very order which now eludes the poem's main character.

> the dead man's unique appearance; such treatment also eliminates the difference between lifeless matter and a living creature.[45]

Achilles' own doom now stands close by, as he knows well. His newly rediscovered commitment to death may be read as a final validation of the heroic code. It is possible that although he does question the heroic ideal throughout the poem, Achilles 'comes to his senses' in the end, so to speak, and realizes that dying well is the one thing which gives life shape and meaning. Certainly, Achilles does come to terms with his own issues concerning dying, achieving the almost 'godlike calm' mentioned by Whitman, in which state compassion and respect for fellow warriors become for him mere trivialities in the greater scheme of things, and in which state death is the only, final reality. By the end of the poem Achilles is committed once more to dying well in battle, but the poem shows how completely dehumanized (albeit temporarily) he is by virtue of this choice, how alienated from the realms of the human and divine, and how as a result he is reduced to a thing abhorrent to the natural order.

As Schein comments, it was once thought that the *Iliad* originally ended with Hektor's death, as it was felt this formed the natural, poetic conclusion to the μῆνις of Achilles. The last two books of the epic, it was argued, had been added at a later point in time. As far as Schein is concerned, however, there are two fundamental reasons why an ending at book 22 is impossible for the poem. Firstly, he acknowledges that

> ...the *Iliad* is not merely such a story of killing, death and vengeance as must have been common in the poetic tradition. Rather, it consistently and critically plays against the conventional themes and values of heroic warfare and a view of human life as tragic precisely because it can only be lived within the contradictions and limitations of this heroism. If the poem were to end with the killing of Hektor, this humane distinctively Iliadic vision would be missing, and the conclusion would be untrue to the poem's own themes and values.[46]

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[45] Vernant 1991 p. 70.

[46] Schein 1984 p. 153

Secondly, the poem cannot end with Achilles in a state of inhibited and unsympathetic alienation. Rather he must regain his feelings of love and solidarity which were part of his character prior to the quarrel with Agamemnon. As Schein says, "vengeance may be complete, but Achilles is not."[47] It is also worth noting that in the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, the hero goes on to reconcile himself to the reality of death and become reintegrated with his society, and if this Near Eastern text may be accepted as a precedent for Homer, then it certainly supports the argument that all twenty-four books were original to the Homeric text.

Indeed, Achilles is not truly redeemed until he re-learns compassion and mercy, which he shows Priam. He must come full circle in order to complete himself. The consolation shared by Achilles and Priam allows both to resume the life they have been symbolically foregoing in their self-destructive, psychological drive to join the deceased in the cessation of physical pleasure.[48] Priam alone manages to reawaken in Achilles the sense of reverence which he had, even for his foes, prior to the death of Patroklos.

The poem ends with Achilles putting aside the μῆνις which has been his driving force, and it is at this point that he reaches the final stage of his development. The Achilles who slaughters ruthlessly and without regard to social conventions is not the finished product of his personal evolution. To read Achilles' return to battle as a final gesture of acceptance of the heroic code on the part of the poet is to completely overlook the last book of the epic. The final book, the end note of the piece, sets the tone on which the audience departs, and the final message is one of compassion and the solidarity of the human experience.

Like Achilles, who is in so many respects already dead, Priam knows that with the fall of Hektor, his life, too, as well as that of Troy, is for all purposes, forfeit. These two, so removed from the reach of the world of the living, are the only individuals capable of comforting each other. Achilles is placed in the strange position of being the one who has inflicted innumerable cares upon Priam, while feeling compelled, at this point, to be the one to care *for him*. This is expressed in the Greek with varying uses of the verb κήδω/κήδομαι. Macleod remarks:

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[47] Ibid, p.153

[48] Ibid, p. 97-99.

> It is a bitter paradox that Achilles is now far from idle at Troy, when he is killing Priam's sons (σέ τε κήδων ἠδὲ σὰ τέκνα), doing to him the opposite (κήδων) of what he should be doing for Peleus (κομίζω=κήδομαι). It is also a fine touch that Achilles sees both Priam's and Peleus' suffering as embodied in one and the same person: himself.[49]

Achilles addresses Priam, marveling at his audacity and his 'iron heart'. He expresses amazement that an old man has dared to enter the enemy camp, and realizes that like himself, Priam is a man who can dare the seemingly impossible, for the very reason that he has nothing left to lose. Just as the loss of Patroklos can push Achilles to new levels of endurance and daring, so the loss of Hektor does for Priam.

Respecting him as an equal on account of the depth of his distress, Achilles undergoes a catharsis in consoling the old man, and gives vent to his own grief. This is a new grief however. This is no longer the alienating grief which pushes Achilles outside the boundaries of human convention; this is a shared grief that reunites him with humanity and reintegrates him into the world of the living. Grief and suffering are facts of the human condition; it is one of the things that separates mortals from the immortals, who can never fully experience the repercussions of their actions, the terror of death, or the pain of loss (except, notably, for Thetis, whose strange situation places her in many mortal contexts). Suffering is a shared human lot, and Achilles and Priam experience it together (*Il.* 24.508-526), in the shared act of remembering the dead (as expressed by the dual in τὼ δὲ μνησαμένω).

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[49] See Macleod 1982 p. 134.

In a sense, Achilles becomes the son Priam has lost, and Priam becomes the father Achilles knows he can never see again. In consoling Priam, Achilles urges him to eat, and joins him in a meal. This gesture of human solidarity, after Achilles accepts the old man as a suppliant, restores both to the human community of the living. They have both experienced an ἀνάβασις of sorts, even though the audience knows it will be a short lived return to the light. Achilles will die after being shot in the heel by Paris, and Priam will die when Troy falls (ironically killed by Neoptolemos, in vengeance for his father Achilles[30]).

However, neither of these deaths occurs in the poem (although Priam does poignantly foretell his demise and the ugliness of a harsh death for the elderly in *Il.* 22. 60-76), and although the whole story would likely have been well known to Homer's audience, the poem concludes on a note of peace and resolution, with the fighting suspended for the amount of time required to bury Hektor. In effect, the moment is frozen, as permanent as the scene we encounter engraved on the shield of Achilles, and the scene is just as artificial and contrived. The fluctuations which govern human existence are temporarily suspended, as the poet 'fixes' the moment for all time. The heroes of the war have stepped aside from their mortality and have become the imperishable heroes of epic song. The characters have transcended the bounds of mortality. The poem has done what epic promises to do, but not for the traditional reason. Their immortality is not fixed on a decisive moment in battle, or a glorious death. Rather, it is fixed on a moment of peace as two opposing factions are united, if only temporarily, by their common humanity. A creature subject to what each capricious day brings, any mortal may die tomorrow. Death is not the point, but living is. The moment is all we can be sure of, and as mortals, it has to be enough. The moment is what the poet places before his audience. The poem does not look ahead. It does not matter what will happen next.

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[30] This horrific deed is described by Vergil, *Aeneid* 2.533-558.

Chapter 6

Conclusion: Κλέος and the Role of Poetry

> You lived too long, we have supped full with heroes,
> they waste their deaths on us.
>
> C. D. Andrews, 'To a Pilot lost in Agagón', *in London Town*, no. 459 (March 1938).

Thus far, I have attempted to provide a context for this study (chapter one), sum up relevant research on 'death' terms and delineate their nuances (chapter two), and consider passages in which death is and is not mentioned directly by means of these terms (chapter three). I have also considered the two different deaths represented by this distinction, which is to say the cultural ideal as voiced by the heroes and the biological reality as voiced by the narrator (chapter four), and I then explored points wherein Achilles crosses the boundaries of his roles as a character and enters into the shared perspective of the narrator (chapter five).

In summation, I have determined that many of the poem's secondary narrator/focalizers, most notably the heroes, present a perspective based on a cultural ideal which is specific to their tradition. They accept the ideology of this tradition, and for this reason support its promotion of heroic death. Interacting on a social level within the contexts of their culture and community, they embrace what they think of as death, discussing it and commending it. The primary narrator/focalizer provides an outside perspective on this ideal, one that is critical of the world and system he portrays. He demonstrates time and time again his special knowledge concerning death, which is, as it were, no knowledge at all, for what he knows that the heroes do not is that death cannot be known. It lurks beyond the bounds of language, culture and text. The primary narrator/focalizer seldom names death, but describes its process with great attention to detail. There is nothing tamed or civilized about this death which is 'other', and it stands in stark contrast with that which is conceived by heroes. Hence, characters name death when they are far removed from it, but the narrator describes the deaths which they in reality encounter. Heroes glorify it, while the narrator does not. That is not to say that no characters speak out against it. Consistently those on the periphery of Homeric society (women, the elderly, those belonging to the lower class) offer critical remarks. The speeches of Andromache, Thetis, Priam and Hecuba are all examples. These non-heroic characters in the text serve as embedded focalizers for the perspective of the primary narrator/focalizer and help to emphasise the ambivalence present through the entire poem concerning death and war. Achilles is a unique case, in that he alone of the heroes also comes to adopt this perspective. I have argued it is possible for him to do so because he has access to special knowledge that the other heroes of the poem do not: he knows he will be killed at Troy, and thus, he knows his role in the story and is almost aware of himself as a character. His knowledge in this respect is on a par with the knowledge of the narrator who presents the story, and hence he too may serve as an embedded focalizer for the perspective of the primary narrator/focalizer (he becomes what I have called a sub or pseudo-primary narrator/focalizer). His narrator-like position is emphasised by nothing so much as the fact that when the embassy comes to him in *Il.* 9, he is in the act of playing the lyre and singing an epic tale of the glories of men.[1] In this context, he is himself the narrator presenting a story within a story (although he has a remarkably limited audience).

This final chapter must now seek to examine what, in the final analysis, is so unsatisfactory in the heroic code, that the poem should have cause to pose so many powerful questions concerning it.

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[1] τῆ ὅ γε θυμὸν ἔτερπεν, ἄειδε δ᾽ ἄρα κλέα ἀνδρῶν.
Πάτροκλος δέ οἱ οἶος ἐναντίος ἧστο σιωπῆ,
δέγμενος Αἰκίδην, ὁπότε λήξειεν ἀείδων. (*Il.* 9.189-91)

With this he delighted his spirit, and he sang straightway of the glories of men.
But Patroklos sat opposite to him alone in silence,
Watching for Aikides, whenever he would cease from singing.

This brings me to an issue which I have up to this point not spent much time addressing, and that is κλέος, a term that seems to me to offer some final resolution and clarification to the problems posed in preceding chapters.

There are several references in the poem to the 'men to come', referred to either as the ἐσσόμενοι (always used in the dative case) or as the ὀψίγονοι ἄνθρωποι (always in the genitive case) in the speeches of characters who wish (or fear) that they might one day, in the indeterminate future, be known to them[2].

No warrior sets out to die; rather, warriors fight for status and material gain, but the only recompense for the warrior who does die in battle, it is emphasised again and again, is immortal glory in song. In this, we can distinguish between κλέος and other types of honour enjoyed only by the living (γέρας, a 'prize' or a 'privilege' and τιμή, an 'estimation in the eyes of one's peers', for example). Κλέος certainly can be had by the living, but it carries on after death, while other, more material manifestations of honour do not.

It is μάχη which is κυδιάνειρα. The glory and fame which are won in battle are bestowed in song. The song is the epic we have before us, and immortal glory requires an appreciative audience. The purpose of the *Iliad* is to preserve the names and deeds of heroes for men to come, those who will continue to make the names of the heroes live. The poem's audience is the hero's immortality, and it is the audience's acknowledgment which bestows upon the heroes the κλέος for which they fight and die. Simply put, to have one's name live on requires that there be somebody to know of it. The audience is the promise of epic: it is, in a sense, the end goal of epic. The audience is required to reflect upon the σῆμα, or the σῆμα does not fulfil its function.

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[2] These references to ἐσσομένοισι appear in *Il.* 2.119, 6.358 and 22.305. Two more uses of the word are found in *Il.* 3.287 and 460, although these two lines make reference merely to what will be reckoned as standard pricing among men to come, not the deeds which will be remembered by them. References to ὀψιγόνων ἀνθρώπων are found in *Il.* 7.87 and *Il.* 3.353. Interestingly, the first two examples, in lines spoken by Agamemnon and Helen, respectively talk about what will be considered shameful among future men. Helen in fact foresees her story becoming the subject of song, on account of her wretchedness. Only the third example, appearing in a speech by Hektor, mentions the possibility of the ἐσσόμενοι remembering him for doing something worthy. Hektor is also the speaker of line 87 in book 7, and again, he expresses the wish to be remembered well. He is in fact, the only character of the poem to mention 'men to come' with clear reference to what it is for which he wishes to be remembered. If the function of epic is to preserve a record of deeds for 'men to come', it is significant that a number of references to this mention being remembered for misconduct rather than glory.

If the audience is the hero's only hope of immortality, why then, we must reasonably ask, does the narrator present such an ambiguous picture of his heroes to his audience? Why does he present them as possessing such conflicted attitudes towards the death they face every time they enter battle?

To attempt to answer these questions, we must consider the nature of fame and glory in the poem, and the ways in which it is inextricably bound up with the lack of a Homeric notion of an afterlife. For the hero, the proposed role of poetry is to act as a substitute for an afterlife. How do the κλέα ἀνδρῶν compare to the alternatives?

As is so often the case with early Greek mythological and religious conceptions, it is useful in considering Homer's underworld to look first at its precursors in the ancient Near East. Again, we turn to the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, and it is worth noting that it depicts a view of the kingdom of the dead with which the Homeric audience might well feel they are intimately acquainted. In the Mesopotamian poem, it is stated that the dead may not ever return to look upon the light of the sun. They flit about in darkness like winged birds or bats, hopeless, eating dust. We hear that Enkidu (comrade of Gilgamesh, who is in many respects similar to Patroklos in his relationship to Achilles) has died and descended to the underworld:

> to the house which those who enter cannot leave
> on the road where travelling is one way only,
> to the house where those who stay are deprived
> of light,
> where dust is their food, and clay their bread.
> They are clothed, like birds, with feathers,
> and they see no light, and they dwell in
> darkness.[3]

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[3] West 1997 discusses these similarities on pp. 161-163. This translation of tablet VII, column IV, is taken from Dalley 1989 p. 89.

Because of the κατάβασις of book 11, the *Odyssey* contains the greatest wealth of information concerning the Homeric concept of the underworld. The dark gloom of the Homeric underworld, like that mentioned above, is emphasised in Odysseus' question to the shade of his dead companion, Ἐλπῆνορ, πῶς ἦλθες ὑπὸ ζόφον ἠερόεντα; (*Od.* 11.57, 'Elpenor, how have you come beneath the murky darkness?') and by the question of the shade of Antiklea to her still living son Odysseus, τέκνον ἐμόν, πῶς ἦλθες ὑπὸ ζόφον ἠερόεντα ζωὸς ἐών; / χαλεπὸν δὲ τάδε ζωοῖσιν ὁρᾶσθαι (*Od.* 11.155-156, 'My child, how have you come beneath the murky darkness although still living? / For it is difficult for the living to behold these things'). Odysseus also encounters the greatly diminished king Agamemnon, whose portrayal of the kingdom of the dead is undeniably bleak (Od. *11*.385-395).

One of the more remarkable aspects of the Homeric afterlife is the almost total absence of after-death judgment or sentience to allow such a judgment to be of consequence. The fate of all mortals is the same, regardless of how they conduct themselves in life. There is neither reward nor penalty. An individual conducts himself as he does in life because he is aware that other men are watching and judging, and that the opinions rendered will become inextricably bound up with his reputation. This reputation, in turn, will become his κλέος when he is dead, and will determine how he is remembered. Unworthy deeds are as deeply imprinted in cultural memory as those that are worthy. This is, in truth, the sole punishment the Homeric individual faces after death for misconduct in life.

For Homer, Hades' kingdom offers only a semi-existence to the ψυχή, while epic offers true immortality via κλέος. Κλέος is the one part of an individual that might survive in a meaningful sense, and it stands in stark contrast to the less than meaningful afterlife in the house of the dead. It is true that the hero will not be alive to appreciate the rewards of his κλέος, but then again, the ψυχαί in the underworld are not sentient enough to appreciate the immortality which they have obtained either.

The immortality of song is all that can separate the fate of the hero from the fate of every other mortal who has ever lived. It is the special status that sets the hero apart, the distinction he enjoyed in life continued after death.

There are in fact several meanings for κλέος, among them 'rumour', or 'renown' among living peoples (e.g. *Il.* 13.363-367). We hear much on the κλέος that is intended for appreciation among future generations. For example, the glory of the deeds of Zeus are imperishable (*Il.* 2.324-325).

Strangely enough, the gods seem to be concerned about their own personal κλέος, despite the fact that they have true immortality in every sense of the word, as we see in the complaint by Poseidon, which is in turn answered with reassurances by Zeus (*Il.* 7.448-458).

Glory for mortals is far more commonly mentioned, however, and man's fame may not merely be an imperishable thing among other men. Rather, it could reach to the very heavens, as we hear in *Il.* 10.211-213 and *Il.* 8.191-192.

We find references to glory being won among the men of the future for a number of different acts which are deemed worthy of remembrance. Prowess in battle is the most common, as one may observe in *Il.* 4.193-197and *Il.* 4.204-207.[4] Interestingly, κλέος need not be won only by killing a foe in battle. Glory may even be granted for horse theft (*Il.* 5.271-273) or for the taking of a foe's armour which is the trophy, i.e. the tangible evidence of a kill (*Il.* 17.129-131). Even as glory may be won, it may also be lost through acts of cowardice, as we hear in *Il.* 5.529-532, (repeated again in *Il.* 15.561-564).

There is not a single reference throughout the whole of the *Iliad* to a woman earning κλέος. This is not at all surprising, since women in Homeric society do not typically partake in the sort of actions for which κλέος is bestowed.[5] For this reason, even though one of the references to the opinions of 'men to come' is spoken by Helen, and she is talking about what the future generations will make of her story (and hence, she must be anticipating that her name will live on and that she will have a fame of sorts), she does not use the word κλέος. Κλέος simply does not seem to be open to women, and as shown by some of the examples cited above, it is not merely because κλέος can only be a positive sort of fame, for it certainly may attach itself to a man for his unworthy deeds.[6] This raises the question of whether women, in Homeric epic, have any access to any meaningful sort of immortality at all. Certainly, their ψυχαί dwell in the underworld along with those of men (Odysseus' encounter with the shade of his mother Antiklea in *Od*. 11.152-224 and the following catalogue of the shades of women in *Od*. 11. 225-330 provide ample proof of this), but as has already been discussed, they exist only as visual images of the forms they took in life until they are allowed to drink blood, and even then their restoration to cognitive ability is short-lived.

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[4] Also on κλέος through performance on the battlefield, we also find *Il.* 5.1-3, *Il* 6.441-446, *Il.* 7.89-91, *Il.* 9.410-413, *Il.* 11.225-228, *Il.* 17.12-17, *Il.* 17.129-132, and *Il.* 18.120-121.

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[5] The Amazons, of course, are the exception to the rule. They are mentioned twice in the *Iliad*, (Priam makes reference to them to Helen at *Il.* 3.188-189, saying καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼν ἐπίκουρος ἐὼν μετὰ τοῖσιν ἐλέχθην / ἤματι τῷ ὅτε τ' ἦλθον 'Αμαζόνες ἀντιάνειραι, and at *Il*. 6. 186 the story of Bellerophontes' trials is recounted, in which we are told τὸ τρίτον αὖ κατέπεφνεν 'Αμαζόνας ἀντιανείρας). Although in both cases the Amazons are called ἀντιάνειραι, it is still noteworthy that no one Amazon is mentioned specifically by name in the poem. Equal to men in battle though they may be, the Amazons are still denied that most fundamental necessity for fame: the preservation of their names. Hence, they are for all intents and purposes denied the κλέος which is awarded to their male counterparts.

[6] It is at this point worth noting, however, that while a woman may not achieve κλέος in epic, she can achieve it in later Greek darma, as evidenced by Antigone. She may also achieve a form of ἀρετή.. Loraux 1987 has remarked that it is not uncommon for young unmarried girls to be associated in Greek thought with war. Because they are not yet fully initiated into the world of women and Aphrodite, they are often aligned with what the Greeks considered masculine spheres of interest (this point is made on p. 33). For this reason, in times of crisis a maiden may be called upon to sacrifice her life, and may thereby achieve an ἀρετή similar to that which is won by males in battle (this point is made on p. 48 of the same). The theme of the virgin sacrifice is prevalent throughout Greek mythology (Iphigenia, Andromeda, Hesione, and Macaria being but a few examples), and the general idea seems to be that because the city is viewed as a virgin (hence, most have the typically virgin goddess as a protectress, whose shrine is located in the sacred innermost heart of the city), in times of danger when outside forces threaten penetration, a maiden may be offered up in the place of the city, giving her virginity so that that of the city might be preserved or become victorious in war. The idea of death for the young girl as an alternate loss of virginity and marriage to Hades is very common in ancient Greece. Hence, in being killed, she sacrifices her virginity. Indeed, even today in Greece, girls who die before marriage are sometimes buried in a wedding gown.

Significant immortality is the sole prerogative of aristocratic males while only immortality of the insignificant type is open to everyone. Insignificant immortality is all that is promised by conventional Greek religious belief (at least early on). Significant immortality is the allure of epic. Epic poetry provides an incentive for men to enter battle willingly, promising something better.

The ψυχή acts as a visual testimonial to the fact of a person's existence, a monument of sorts that the individual did in fact live and breath at one time upon the earth. Epic provides a different immortality via language, and is a monument in living memory, allowing the heroes to flourish forever on the lips of men. Κλέος might exert an appeal even if there were an afterlife to console the dead, but the fact that the afterlife is no consolation certainly works to increase its value. What epic has to offer is all the more enticing specifically *because* there is no alternate, meaningful afterlife in any sense of the word.

The poetic tradition enshrines a moral code among heroes which functions as a political machine, offering an exclusive position in posterity to the warriors who give their lives in battle, and for this reason, it is reasonable that it presents few options. The poetic tradition reinforces its own status quo. It depicts a non-existence in Hades' kingdom, it offers κλέος as an alternative, and society, believing in the self-perpetuated value system, continues to extol the warrior code. As long as warriors die in battle, they want recompense, which is κλέος. Hence, κλέος perpetuates war, and war perpetuates κλέος. If belief in a true afterlife develops, the poetic tradition loses one of its prime functions, which is to be the sole bestower of immortality. Early Greek religion is both reflected in and shaped by epic, and poetry exists in early Greek society as a powerful vehicle for determining social order. In this pursuit, the heroes elevate fame to a position in which it is deemed more important than the 'soul'.

Κλέος, the great promise of the warrior code, is in fact given a rather cursory treatment in the poem. Again, we might bear in mind that out of all the deaths that there are in the text, only Sarpedon dies facing his death, roaring out defiance, living and dying the heroic ideal.[7] What sort of κλέος must attach itself to all of the men whom Homer depicts as fleeing for their lives, struck down from behind? What κλέος are we to grant to all the heroes who are shown to speak of one ideal and yet live and die by another?

In fact, heroic death is rarely shown in application. The innate human will to survive contravenes the possibility of selfless sacrifice based only on what some future generations, unknown to the hero, will say about him. This is what epic as a genre promises, and the poem shows us, again and again, that it is not enough.

The heroes speak of accepting a death which they do not know. They have a culturally-constructed notion of dying, which bears little or no relation to the actual process of losing life. They wrongly give name to an entity which is no entity at all. They seek to understand and accept something that does not exist. The narrator, always present in the text, does not often name what he knows no man can experience, and yet all passages depicting the moment of death belong to him.

The many characters who extol heroic death do not typically obtain it. The one character who explicitly questions it (Achilles), will obtain it, but not within the body of the poem. This is no small point, and moreover he will not obtain it without fully coming to understand first what it is to which he has committed himself. He alone of the heroes gains this understanding, and the poem does not show us his death, only his redemption and re-entry into the spheres of compassion and fellow-feeling.

In the end, the poem acts as the grave marker to its own ethical code. A σῆμα is traditionally designed to call to the mind of the observer all that is best in whatever it commemorates, and while the *Iliad* does this masterfully, it also presents a carefully balanced perspective between character and narrator, acceptance and dread.

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[7] One should note that Sarpedon's position is unique, in that Zeus has already decided to remove his body from the battlefield as a special honour.

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Appendix

List of Appearances of Words which denote 'Death' in the *Iliad* (cross reference line numbers for death terms in hendiadys)

Passage	Context	Speaker	Addressee
Μοῖρα/ Μόρος			
Book 3, line 101: μοῖρα	non-immediate	Menelaos	Trojans/Achaians
Book 4, line 517: μοῖρα	immediate	narrator	audience
Book 5, line 83: μοῖρα	immediate	narrator	audience
	(in hendiadys with term possessing colour terminolgy)		
Book 5, line 613: μοῖρα	immediate	narrator	audience
Book 6, line 488: μοῖραν	non-immediate	Hektor	Andromache
Book 7, line 52: μοῖρα	non-immediate	Helenos	Hektor
Book 9, line 318: μοῖρα	non-immediate	Achilles	Odysseus
Book 12, line 116: μοῖρα	immediate	narrator	audience
Book 13, line 602: μοῖρα	near-immediate	narrator	Menelaos
Book 15, line 117: μοῖρα	non-immediate	Ares	Olympians
Book 16, line 334: μοῖρα	immediate	narrator	audience
	(in hendiadys with term possessing colour terminolgy)		
Book 16, line 434: μοῖρ'	non-immediate	Zeus	Hera
Book 16, line 849: μοῖρ'	immediate	Patroklos	Hektor
Book 16, line 853: μοῖρα	non-immediate	Patroklos	Hektor
Book 17, line 421: μοῖρα	non-immediate	'some' Achaians hypothetical Achaian (i.e. narrator)	
Book 17, line 478: μοῖρα	non-immediate	Automedon	Alkimedon
Book 17, line 672: μοῖρα	non-immediate	Menelaos	Aiantes and Meriones
Book 18, line 119: μοῖρα	non-immediate	Achilles	Thetis
Book 18, line 120: μοῖρα	non-immediate	Achilles	Thetis
Book 18, line 465: μόρος	non-immediate	Thetis	Hephaistos
Book 19, line 87: Μοῖρα	non-immediate	Agamemnon	Achilles/Achaians
Book 19, line 410: Μοῖρα	non-immediate	horse via Hera	Xanthos
Book 19, line 421: μόρος	non-immediate	Achilles	Xanthos
Book 20, line 477: μοῖρα	immediate	narrator	audience
	(in hendiadys with term possessing colour terminolgy)		
Book 21, line 83: μοῖρ'	near-immediate	Lykaon	Achilles
Book 21, line 110: μοῖρα	non-immediate	Achilles	Lykaon
Book 22, line 5: μοῖρα	near immediate	narrator	audience
Book 22, line 303: μοῖρα	near-immediate	Hektor	Hektor
Book 22, line 436: μοῖρα	near(post) -immediate	Hekabe	Hektor
Book 23, line 80: μοῖρα	non-immediate	Patroklos	Achilles
Book 24, line 132: μοῖρα	non-immediate	Zeus	Thetis

Αἶσα

Book 1, line 418: αἴσῃ	non-immediate	Thetis	Achilles
Book 16, line 441: αἴσῃ	non-immediate	Hera	Zeus
Book 22, line 61: αἴσῃ	non-immediate	Priam	Hektor
Book 22, line 179: αἴσῃ	non-immediate	Athena	Zeus
Book 24, line 224: αἶσα	non-immediate	Priam	Hekabe
Book 24, line 428: αἴσῃ	non-immediate	Priam	Hermes
Book 24, line 750: αἴσῃ	non-immediate	Hekuba	Hektor

Πότμος

Book 2, line 359: πότμον	non-immediate	Nestor	Argives
Book 4, line 170: πότμον	non-immediate	Agamemnon	Menelaos
Book 4, line 396: πότμον	immediate	narrator	audience
Book 6, line 412: πότμον	non-immediate	Andromache	Hektor
Book 7, line 52: πότμον	non-immediate	Helenos	Hektor
Book 11, line 263: πότμον	immediate	narrator	audience
Book 15, line 495: πότμον	non-immediate	Hektor	Trojans/Lykians
Book 16, line 857: πότμον	immediate	narrator	audience
Book 18, line 96: πότμος	non-immediate	Thetis	Achilles
Book 20, line 337: πότμον	non-immediate	Poseidon	Hera
Book 21, line 588: πότμον	non-immediate	Agenor	Achilles
Book 22, line 39: πότμον	non-immediate	Priam	Hektor
Book 22, line 363: πότμον	immediate	narrator	audience

Κήρ

Book 1, line 228: κὴρ	non-immediate	Achilles	Agamemnon
Book 2, line 302: κῆρες	non-immediate	Odysseus	Agamemnon
Book 2, line 352: κῆρα	non-immediate	Nestor	Achaians
Book 2, line 834: κῆρες	non-immediate	narrator	audience
Book 2, line 859: κῆρα	immediate (referred to as dark)	narrator	audience
Book 3, line 6: κῆρα	non-immediate	narrator	audience
Book 3, line 32: κῆρ'	non-immediate	narrator	audience
Book 3, line 360: κῆρα	non-immediate	narrator	audience
Book 3, line 454: κηρὶ	non-immediate	narrator	audience
Book 4, line 11: κῆρας	non-immediate	narrator	audience
Book 5, line 22: κῆρα	non-immediate	narrator	audience
Book 5, line 652: κῆρα	near-immediate	Sarpedon	Tlepolemos
Book 7, line 254: κῆρα	non-immediate	narrator	audience
Book 8, line 70: κῆρε	near-immediate	narrator	audience

Book 8, line 73: κῆρες	near-immediate	narrator	audience
Book 8, line 528: κῆρες	non-immediate	Hektor	Trojans
Book 9, line 411: κῆρας	non-immediate	Achilles	embassy
Book 11, line 332: κῆρες	immediate (referred to as dark)	narrator	audience
Book 11, line 360: κῆρα	non-immediate	narrator	audience
Book 11, line 443: κῆρα	immediate (referred to as dark)	Odysseus	Sokos
Book 11, line 585: κῆρ'	non-immediate (avoided)	narrator	audience
Book 12, line 113: κῆρας	immediate	narrator	audience
Book 12, line 326: κῆρες	non-immediate	Sarpedon	Glaukos
Book 12, line 402: κῆρας	non-immediate	narrator	audience
Book 13, line 283: κῆρας	non-immediate	Idomeneus	Meriones
Book 13, line 566: κῆρ'	non-immediate (avoided)	narrator	audience
Book 13, line 596: κῆρ'	non-immediate (avoided)	narrator	audience
Book 13, line 648: κῆρ'	non-immediate (avoided)	narrator	audience
Book 13, line 665: κῆρ'	non-immediate	narrator	audience
Book 14, line 408: κῆρ'	non-immediate (avoided)	narrator	audience
Book 14, line 462: κῆρα	non-immediate (avoided)	narrator	audience
Book 15, line 287: κῆρας	non-immediate (avoided)	Thoas	Achaians
Book 16, line 47: κῆρα	non-immediate	narrator	audience
Book 16, line 687: κῆρα	near-immediate (almost avoided)	narrator	audience
Book 16, line 817: κῆρ'	non-immediate (avoided)	narrator	audience
Book 17, line 714: κῆρα	non-immediate	Thrasymedes	Achaians
Book 18, line 115: κῆρα	non-immediate	Achilles	Hektor
Book 18, line 117: κῆρα	non-immediate	Achilles	Hektor
Book 18, line 535: Κήρ	non-immediate (on the shield)	narrator	audience
Book 21, line 66: κῆρα	near immediate	narrator	audience
Book 21, line 565: κῆρας	non-immediate	Agenor	Agenor
Book 22, line 202: κῆρας	near-immediate	narrator	audience
Book 22, line 210: κῆρε	non-immediate	narrator	audience
Book 22, line 365: κῆρα	non-immediate	Achilles	Hektor
Book 23, line 78: κὴρ	non-immediate	Patroklos	Achilles
Book 24, line 82: κῆρα	non-immediate	narrator	audience

Θάνατος

Book 1, line 60: θάνατόν	non-immediate	Achilles	Agamemnon

Book 2, line 302: θανάτοιο	non-immediate	Odysseus	Achaians
Book 2, line 359: θάνατον	non-immediate	Nestor	Achaians
Book 2, line 401: θάνατόν	non-immediate	narrator	audience
Book 2, line 834: θανάτοιο	non-immediate	narrator	audience
Book 3, line 101: θάνατος	non-immediate	Menelaos	Trojans/Achaians
Book 3, line 173: θάνατός	non-immediate	Helen	Priam
Book 3, line 309: θανάτοιο	non-immediate	Priam	Achaians
Book 4, line 155: θάνατόν	non-immediate	Agamemnon	Menelaos
Book 4, line 270: θάνατος	non-immediate	Idomeneus	Agamemnon
Book 5, line 68: θάνατος	immediate (as a mist)	narrator	audience
Book 5, line 83: θάνατος	immediate (taking hold of the eyes)	narrator	audience
Book 5, line 553: θανάτοιο	immediate (death as darkness)	narrator	aidience
Book 8, line 70: θανάτοιο	near-immediate	narrator	audience
Book 9, line 411: θανάτοιο	non-immediate	Achilles	embassy
Book 9, line 416: θανάτοιο	non-immediate	Achilles	embassy
Book 9, line 571: θάνατον	non-immediate (in story set in the past)	narrator	audience
Book 10, line 383: θάνατος	immediate (but pretending it is not)	Odysseus	Dolon
Book 11, line 332: θανάτοιο	immediate	narrator	audience
Book 11, line 362: θάνατον	non-immediate	Diomedes	Hektor
Book 11, line 451: θανάτοιο	immediate	Odysseus	Sokos
Book 12, line 326: θανάτοιο	non-immediate	Sarpedon	Glaukos
Book 13, line 544: θάνατος	immediate	narrator	audience
Book 13, line 602: θανάτοιο	immediate	narrator	Menelaos
Book 14, line 231: Θανάτοιο	non-immediate (not occuring, but personified)	narrator	audience
Book 15, line 349: θάνατον	non-immediate	Hektor	Trojans
Book 15, line 495: θάνατον	non-immediate	Hektor	Trojans/Lykians etc.
Book 15, line 628: θανάτοιο	non-immediate	narrator	audience
Book 16, line 47: θάνατόν	non-immediate	Patroklos	Achilles
Book 16, line 98: θάνατον	non-immediate	Achilles	Patroklos
Book 16, line 334: θάνατος	immediate (emphasis on the eyes)	narrator	audience
Book 16, line 350: θανάτου	immediate (emphasis on the eyes)	narrator	audience
Book 16, line 414: θάνατος	immediate	narrator	audience
Book 16, line 442: θανάτοιο	non-immediate	Hera	Zeus
Book 16, line 454: θάνατόν	non-immediate	Hera	Zeus
Book 16, line 502: θανάτοιο	immediate	narrator	audience
Book 16, line 580: θάνατος	immediate	narrator	audience
Book 16, line 672: Θανάτῳ	non-immediate (personified)	Zeus	Apollo
Book 16, line 682: Θανάτῳ	non-immediate (personified)	narrator	audience
Book 16, line 687: θανάτοιο	immediate	narrator	audience

	(nearly avoided)		
Book 16, line 693: θάνατον	immediate	narrator	Patroklos
Book 16, line 853: θάνατος	non-immediate	Patroklos	Hektor
Book 16, line 855: θανάτοιο	immediate	narrator	audience
Book 17, line 201: θάνατος	non-immediate	Zeus	Hektor
Book 17, line 381: θάνατον	non-immediate	narrator	audience
Book 17, line 478: θάνατος	non-immediate	Automedon	Alkimedon
Book 17, line 672: θάνατος	non-immediate	Menelaos	Aiantes and Meriones
Book 17, line 714: θάνατον	non-immediate	Thrasymedes	Achianans
Book 18, line 464: θανάτοιο	non-immediate	Hephaistos	Thetis
Book 19, line 274: θάνατον	non-immediate	Achilles	Zeus/Achaians
Book 19, line 420: θάνατον	non-immediate	Achilles	Xanthos
Book 20, line 300: θανάτου	non-immediate	Poseidon	Poseidon
Book 20, line 337: θάνατον	non-immediate	Poseidon	Aineias
Book 20, line 350: θανάτοιο	non-immediate	Achilles	Achilles
Book 20, line 390: θάνατος	immediate	Achilles	Iphition
Book 20, line 449: θάνατον	non-immediate	Achilles	Hektor
Book 20, line 477: θάνατος	immeddiate (with colour terminology)	narrator	audience
Book 20, line 481: θάνατον	immediate	narrator	audience
Book 21, line 66: θάνατόν	non-immediate	narrator	audience
Book 21, line 103: θάνατον	near-immediate	Achilles	Lykaon
Book 21, line 110: θάνατος	non-immediate	Achilles	Lykaon
Book 21, line 281: θανάτῳ	non-immediate	Achilles	Zeus/Achilles
Book 21, line 565: θάνατον	non-immediate	Agenor	Agenor
Book 22, line 175: θανάτοιο	non-immediate	Zeus	Olympians
Book 22, line 180: θανάτοιο	non-immediate	Athena	Zeus
Book 22, line 202: θανάτοιο	near-immediate	narrator	audience
Book 22, line 210: θανάτοιο	near-immediate	narrator	audience
Book 22, line 297: θάνατον	near-immediate	Hektor	Hektor
Book 22, line 300: θάνατος	near-immediate	Hektor	Hektor
Book 22, line 361: θανάτοιο	immediate	narrator	audience
Book 22, line 436: θάνατος	non-immediate	Hekabe	Hektor
Book 24, line 132: θάνατος	non-immediate	Thetis	Achilles
Book 24, line 152: θάνατος	non-immediate	Zeus	Iris
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Book 24, line 328: θάνατον	non-immediate	narrator	audience
Book 24, line 428: θανάτοιό	non-immediate	Priam	Hermes
Book 24, line 750: θανάτοιό	non-immediate	Hekabe	Hektor

Τέλος

Book 5, line 553: τέλος	immediate (with reference to darkness)	narrator	audience
Book 9, line 411: τέλος	non-immediate	Achilles	embassy
Book 9, line 416: τέλος	non-immediate	Achilles	embassy
Book 11, line 439: τέλος	non-immediate	narrator	audience

Book 11, line 451: τέλος	immediate	Hektor	Sokos
Book 13, line 602: τέλος	immediate	narrator	Menelaos
Book 16, line 502: τέλος	immediate	narrator	audience
Book 16, line 855: τέλος	immediate	narrator	audience
Book 22, line 361: τέλος	immediate	narrator	audience

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